Portrait of a Dog

Mazo de la Roche

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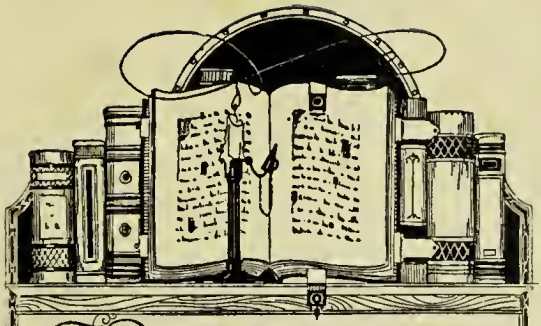

Books are keys
to wisdom's treasure;
Books are paths
that upward lead;
Books are gates
to lands of pleasure;
Books are friends.
Come, let us read.

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO

Sara S. Forsythe

PORTRAIT OF A DOG

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OF CANADA, LIMITED
TORONTO

PORTRAIT OF A DOG

BY

MAZO DE LA ROCHE

ILLUSTRATED BY

MORGAN DENNIS

TORONTO: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF
CANADA LIMITED, AT ST. MARTIN'S HOUSE
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PART I

PUPPYHOOD

I

It is not easy, here in Devon, to picture the scene which was the setting for my first sight of you. Between it and me the lovely Devon landscape rises, a green and sunlit barrier. The thick rounded clumps of trees, the hedges outlining the curious shapes of the fields, Dartmoor itself rising darkly to High Willhays, all shut me in from that far-off place. The song of the finch, the scent of the moss-rose, shut me in.

I close my eyes, put my hand across my forehead, and press my thumb and middle finger against my temples. The red ploughed fields, fields of shining barley, of silvery oats, of fine fair wheat, are darkened. For a space I still hear the bird song, smell the sweet garden scents, then they too fade and slowly, against the darkness, I find the place I am looking for.

I see the grey sky of winter, the square stubborn house facing the grey waters of the

lake, into which slow snowflakes fall and disappear. The land sleeps under its covering of snow, not, it seems, in rest after fruitfulness, not awaiting the glad renewal of spring, but in a chill trance of disdain for those whom it has defeated.

Still, it is Christmas. There is a holly wreath upon the door, green club-moss and boughs of balsam are above the pictures and the square, small-paned windows. The resinous smell of the boughs, the smell of a pine knot burning, have given us a strange feeling of gaiety, made us forget the shadow that hangs over the house.

We are gathered about you, standing on your uncertain puppy legs in the middle of the room, staring up at the faces surrounding you.

You were courageous then, as always. Pathetically small and soft and round, you stared up at us who must have seemed beings of formidable proportions to you, terrifying, one would think, after the snugness of your kennel, with your brothers and sisters all about you and your mother's side looming warm and protective between you and the world. You had been snatched from that, suffered the cold discomfort of a long railway journey, a long ride in a sleigh over snow-drifted roads, and then, the slats of your box having been

wrenched off in the kitchen, you had been carried in to us by the stableman and set down on the rug before the fire. What appalling changes for a tiny being two months old! Yet you turned up your little muzzle, looked from one to another of us out of velvety dark eyes, and, when a saucer of warm milk was set before you, you plunged your nose into it, nor raised it again until the last drop was gone and your eager tongue propelled the empty saucer across the floor.

After the milk you looked even rounder than before, more intrepid, your tail took on a cocky curve, again you raised your muzzle and surveyed us. Each bent toward you with an outstretched, coaxing hand, each longing to feel the baby plumpness of your body. Your nose was wet, a drop of milk hung on your chin, your eyes shone. You looked at us half timidly, half roguishly. There was no fear in you. Then, with a little kick of the hind legs that nearly sent you over, you trotted straight into the hands of the one who was to be your master. Laughing, he picked you up, laid you against the broadness of his chest, and bent his head to you. You were my Christmas present to him, the last Christmas present he was ever to get.

II

It was prophesied by Lizzie, the servant, that there would be no rest in the house that night for your yapping. She was not keen to have you at all. The big grey cat Christopher was pet enough for her, and Jock, the collie, was pet enough for her husband who looked after the horses. She looked on a tiny Scotch terrier puppy as an interloper. She sat down with Christopher on her snowy starched apron and regarded you without favour. She fed cream to Christopher out of her own teaspoon, which he guided to his lips with one rounded furry paw. He ignored you even when you ran in circles about the two of them uttering small, throaty barks of derision. But Jock rolled you over and over on the floor, sniffing you, and then looked up at us with a sheepish grin.

A box was lined with clean straw and set behind the kitchen range for warmth. A bit of blanket was laid in it and there you were put to bed. Lizzie, still predicting a night of wails, covered the box with a black tea-tray on which

WHEN CHRISTOPHER PATTED YOUR NOSE YOU
TOOK IT IN GOOD PART

was painted a round red rose. There was silence under the tray, but, through a chink, I caught the gleam of a roguish eye. Jock caught it too, for he put his nose against the chink and snuffed. Then, unable to suppress his curiosity as to what you were doing, he pushed the tray aside and it fell with a clatter to the floor. He stood grinning down at you, wagging his great plumed tail. Any other puppy would have been terrified, but you sat on your bit of blanket quite sure of yourself, rather proud, it seemed, of having a bed all your own. When Jock put his head in beside you and nozzled you, you did not quail. When Christopher, balancing on the edge of the box, patted your nose with just concealed claws, you took it in good part. From this first day your courage was your most distinguishing characteristic. Only once in your life did it fail you.

The tray was replaced, this time held down by the weight of a flat-iron, Lizzie meanwhile admonishing you, in a hopeless tone, to be 'a good wee dog and not rampage the whole night long'. She sat Christopher on his cushion, called Jock to his mat, and, with doubt and dolor in her face, began to wind the clock.

No one thought about you until the next morning for you never uttered a sound. Then,

as always, you were ready to accommodate yourself, make the best of things. I myself removed the tray from above you and picked you up. You came soft and yielding, yawning to show the whiteness of your teeth, rolling your eyes to show their brightness, romping into the set and sad life of the house.

It was a problem what to name you. We tried one Scotch name after another, and at last, looking over your pedigree, hit on the bright idea of calling you after your mother and your grandmother—Argyle Bunty. During your life, you acquired half a dozen nicknames, even such an unkind one as 'Little Black Devil'. You came for them all impartially, and you were ever so alert to hear yourself mentioned that the word *she* alone in course of conversation was enough to bring you to your feet out of a doze or, at any rate, to produce a responsive thump on the floor from your tail.

That tail! Was there ever such another? A man, they say, may wear his heart on his sleeve; certainly you wore yours on your tail. Other dogs I have known wagged their tails in pleasure or drew them close in fear or apology. Yours never drooped. You waved it like a banner and it was seldom that it was absolutely still. A breeder told me that its carriage

was too 'gay' for showing, that your muzzle was not heavy enough, that your eyes were too large. He agreed, and well he might, that they were the most beautiful eyes he had ever seen in a dog's head and that you had a 'grand little body'. Out walking, the waving of that tail gave our progress the air of a procession. It was a hardened hater of dogs who had not a smile for you. You had none of the dourness and reserve attributed to your breed. From morning to night you craved friendliness, and you were almost as greedy for it as you were for food. Lying stretched asleep on the floor, you would seem suddenly to be conscious of something. Life stirring about you perhaps, and you approved of life with your whole soul. Your tail would thud against the floor in ecstasy.

In those first months you did not show any special affection for any one of us, excepting that when night came and you were tired with ceaseless activity and the investigation of every corner of the house, you invariably laid your weary little body by your master's chair, your head upon his foot. But during the day, if you were picked up, you always protested with wrigglings and tossings of the head against the interruption of your business. From the first Christopher was gentle with

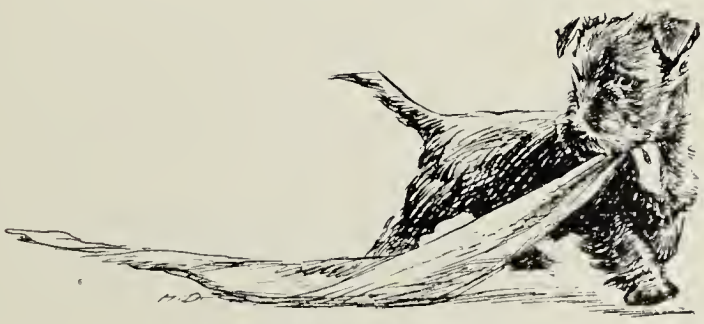
you. At times I was almost angry with him for his gentleness. He would let you bite him, pull his beautiful fur, and treat him to every indignity that you could conceive.

'O, my beauty!' Lizzie would cry, snatching him up, 'how can you let yon wee rascal abuse you so?'

Yet even she came to have a sneaking fondness for you, and as you grew in sleekness and in plumpness she would sometimes say, 'She's getting fair bonny with her grand stout legs.'

Small wonder if her admiration for you was grudging. You gave her endless trouble. Every naughty trick that puppies have you had, and it seemed that we should never get you house-broken. The furniture was shabby and gnawings of walnut legs did not much upset us, but we were proud of our fine old rugs and you were invariably smacked when Lizzie came running with a great cloth to sop the wet spot up. One day when the smacking had been unusually hard you went crestfallen into a corner and sat there for a space. And when the next mishap came, which was all too soon, you galloped with flying ears and tail to the scullery, snatched up the cloth, dragged it with difficulty, and yet with pride in the achievement, back to the very spot of your disgrace. That time there was no smacking.

Just when we had decided that you were incorrigible, you seemed to say to yourself, 'Enough of such infantile behaviour,' and from that time your habits were of spartan cleanliness. It was not easy to force you. You took your time in learning things, but, once you had adopted a new idea, it became a part of you. How many a time I set you upright in the position of begging with no success!



You invariably fell over as though boneless and broke at once into a fury of play, thinking to dazzle me by your acrobatic feats into forgetfulness of artificial tricks. I decided that they were not for you, that, after all, I did not much care about seeing a dog perform. Then suddenly, one day at tea-time, you reared yourself superbly and remained so without wavering, stiff as a ramrod, amid all our excitement and applause. From that moment sitting up seemed to come as natural to you as breathing.

You sat up for everything you wanted, and, as time went on, you added further flourishes to the act of suppliance. Our other dogs had always used their tails as a support, but you drummed yours on the floor meanwhile as a stimulant and excitative to the one petitioned. Our other dogs had held their forepaws rigidly downward or curved them prettily before the breast as they sat up. Yours were never still. You waved them tremulous on the air. You beat them as on an imaginary keyboard, sometimes crossing them. You used them now flamboyantly, now delicately, as though you were conducting an orchestra.

A Scotsman once wrote that 'The real Scottish terrier has the most characteristic facial expression. Jock is a thinker, philosopher, and seer . . . there should be a cast of thought upon his face even when he is a puppy and knows naught of men and dogs and things from personal experience.' You had the cast of thought upon your puppy face but your philosophy was one of beaming approval of the world in which you found yourself.

III

I HAVE never read the story of a dog or, so far as I can remember, a story of any other animal. There is something too unreal to me in attempting to portray the workings of minds so foreign to our own, or putting into their mouths (as some writers do) conversations in our own tongue. To me it seems that an impenetrable veil hangs between us and them, that love them as we may we can never really understand their swift emotions, their wild and fleeting passions, and their loyalties. What does the world look like through their eyes? What monstrous shapes loom above them! What strange scents, howling terrors, bewildering joys and lusts sweep along the passionate course of their short lives! No, I can picture you as I saw you, seldom far from my side, never long from my thoughts, but I cannot enter into your mind or ever so faintly outline the shadows or the lights in which your spirit moved.

IV

How you throve that winter! Everything agreed with you and you agreed with everything. It was great fun, you thought, to be taken for a walk along the icy driveway and the orchard path, falling down every few minutes because of the slipperiness and picking yourself up again with a joyful kick. It was great fun to romp with Jock, be rolled over and over by him, as though you were a soft black ball. Greatest fun of all to chase Christopher the length of the drawing-room, the hall, the dining-room, until at last he leaped, with glowing eyes, to his own special chair, out of your reach. On the wall above his chair hung a miniature bell tower from the Black Forest. He would stand on his hind legs and pat the wooden weight on the end of the bell-cord, swinging it ever farther until the little bell gave a sweet, clear ring. Meanwhile you raged below, running about the chair legs in a convulsion of baffled barking. He was beyond your reach. You could not even

climb to the top of the leather-covered foot-stool. You would cling to its side like a limpet, rolling your eyes in mingled hope and despair till you dropped back to the floor. Then at last a day came when you clambered to the top and sat there, the picture of comical sur-

prise at your own achievement. You seemed afraid to get down for fear you should never again accomplish the feat, but sat surveying the room from this new and startling eminence. It seemed no time until you were jumping over the stool as though it were nothing; and after that came the conquest of Christopher's chair. He no longer had any

refuge from you except on the shoulder of one of us or on Lizzie's lap.

I carried you to the stable and showed you the horses. You were not at all impressed by their size and tried to jump out of my arms into their mangers, sniffed at each long, velvety nose, and even when Mollie, the chestnut, drew up her lip and showed her teeth at you, you only wriggled with delight. There seemed no end to your hardihood. Ten score of hens fluttering and screaming about you, a great turkey cock circling with stiffened wings and wattles red as fire, were nothing but a joke. Your one concern was how you should chase them all at once.

Jock had the evil habit of running after motor-cars. On the first mild day of spring, he and you were on the lawn together when a car passed. I heard a volley of collie barks, and looking out I saw him, a tawny streak, flashing along the road. At his heels you followed, your legs stretched to their utmost, and you both disappeared from sight. You came back exhausted but with a swaggering air of pride, while Jock, knowing he had done wrong, skulked off to the stables. But you had learned the bad habit and you never forgot it.

It was a beautiful spring. The earth stirred early and sent up vigorous green shoots. The

ice broke in the stream and it tumbled coffee-coloured, with a roaring sound, into the brightness of the lake. The lake seemed never still. It moved with small eager waves under the sun and stars. All day Jock chased the gulls up and down the fields.

We were to leave the place and we loved it. All was to be sold except Mollie. We searched for and found another house where we could go and await the last, greatest disaster of all. The dark troubled days passed.

Lizzie and Herbert left, he with Jock on a lead, she with Christopher in a covered basket. I shall not forget the day we left. A day of changeful sunshine, strong wind, full of promise for those who were secure. The cherry trees had come into bloom early that spring and the wind scattered their petals over the ground and blew them even out into the lake. We did not feel as unhappy at leaving the place as we had expected. After the long winter of suspense, this moving, in the spring, stirred the pulse to a new hope.

Your mistress drove ahead in the trap with the youth who was remaining with us to look after Mollie and be generally handy. We others followed in a hired car, a wretchedly small one with not nearly enough space for ourselves and the innumerable things we had

collected at the last. Three of us on a seat not much too wide for two, you sitting very upright on your master's knees, and before us a medley of packages, a bundle of treasured walking-sticks, a hamper, a travelling-rug, a branch of white cherry blossoms, a bunch of violets from the lane. The house looked squat and lonely beneath the towering trees. I could not look back at it. The dark face of your master was all alive with pleasure in this change after his long inaction. If he had regrets he hid them.

It was a long drive, but not too long, to the new house, for the way lay by the shore, with pine woods and the living fields of spring on the other hand. There was nothing you did not see. You seemed to feel yourself in charge of the party, to guard it against the dangers of passing dogs, and those other dangers which you only sensed. You were all for the new adventure, with no thought for poor Christopher and Jock left behind.

The house was a strange one, part of it very old and weather-beaten, half covered by vines and climbing roses, the other part a much later addition, always called by the owners 'the new wing', though it must have been fifty years old. It was tall and bare and severe, and seemed to have no architectural relation-

ship to the old part. I thought of the two parts as two people united by a hateful bond, never having even pretended to care for each other. We had rented the 'new wing', which was indeed like a separate house, for it had its own front door and porch, its own hall and drawing-room with fine high ceiling. One door only connected the two parts of the house and it was always bolted. The house had been built by a retired English naval officer and was now owned by his daughters, who lived in the old part. For years they had lived there in some elegance, but with the death of the father a part of the income passed and bad investments had further depleted it.

The grass beneath a plantation of oaks and maples grew roughly, and here and there one came across the remains of old flower-beds, found red roses and white narcissi in the grass. The largest lawn had been rented to a farmer and was ploughed and sown with corn. One end of the stable was in ruins, and exposed to the weather stood the old carriage with its lamps and long curving shafts on which fowls perched, but in the other end there remained a good stall for Mollie and a space for the trap. Beyond the stable stretched a gnarled old orchard to the lake. I had had a bevy of white pigeons with which I had not been able to

make up my mind to part, and these had been brought and now took up their home in the ruined stable. They flew in and out, sunned themselves on the roof, and made sweet noises all day long.

In spite of the neglected condition of the place, there was an air of kindliness about it as though the spirit of the bluff naval officer still lived there. We liked it and we liked the two old gentlewomen, strange, passionate, sensitive creatures, as far from the commonplace of those about them as their house.

Our furniture had been carried away in vans for storage, for the 'new wing' was furnished with antique pieces that, later, one by one, found their way into dealers' hands at, I was told, cruelly inadequate prices. As we liked the grounds, so we liked the house. Almost happily we made ourselves at home there. Financially we were ruined, the shadow that had been hanging over us so long now moved with us to this new place, but a certain buoyancy of spirit made us ignore the facts, actually kept us from realising them. Surely things would take a turn; surely there was something healing in this hot, flower-scented sunshine! There was a dreamy old-world beauty in the place. A miracle might happen here—would happen.

YOU STOOD ON THE EDGE OF THE CORNFIELD

V

You stood on the edge of the cornfield that rose before you like a great whispering wood. It bent under the breeze, now this way now that, as the breeze scurried. It bent and rose and bent again and threw running shadows on to the warm earth beneath. You had never seen anything like this before. You gave me a puzzled, questioning look and I reassured you by a pat. You trotted into the corn, looking very small, broke into a run, dashed off at an angle, and were lost to sight. I called your name, whistled, but you did not answer. You were never very obedient when about important business of your own. The blackbirds, robins, and finches darted here and there above the corn as though looking for you. But you were lost in that billowy green sea.

It was night when you came out, exhausted but happy, your sides almost touching with hunger. You came out in a rowdy, headlong gallop straight to the door and barked to have it opened. With me I carried a brown bowl of

bread and milk and set it on the grass before you. It was new milk and you put your muzzle into it, eagerly drawing up the bits of bread with a convulsive movement of your sides. You did not pause until the bowl was emptied, then you licked round and round it for every possible crumb, moving it along the grass before you. It turned upside down and you licked the bottom, then looked up at me with an air of triumph as though now you knew what life meant—a hunt, great perils met and overcome, hunger, repletion, and rest. You raised yourself feebly on your hind legs and lifted two wobbly forepaws to be taken up.

Every morning for a week you disappeared into the cornfield and stayed all day, missing your dinner, returning at almost the same moment each evening with the same loud cry for supper. No one knew what you did there, but it is certain that you were never still, for daily you grew larger and thinner and stronger. Sometimes a passionate volley of yaps would come from the middle of the cornfield. The birds would stop their singing, and I, lying under a tree with a book, would sit up and try to penetrate the green depths of the corn, call you, but you never came. The barking would cease, the bird song ring out again free and careless, and I would return to my book,

forgetting all in it, as you forget all in the corn.

Then one day it seemed that you had exhausted it or, in any case, other urgent business pressed upon you. You made the round of the lawn, the shrubbery, the plantation of oaks, the grass-grown orchard. You went into the house, that is, the old part where the two old ladies lived. They told me how you appeared in the doorway while they were at tea and stood there regarding them with an expression at once inquisitive, aggressive, and friendly, your tail waving without pause.

'Dear little doggie!' they both exclaimed. 'Won't you come in and see us?'

You needed no second bidding—in fact you were already in. You advanced to the tea-table, sat up.

'Why, Agatha, he can sit up!' For your sex was something she could not mention.

'Give him a bit of bread! And, I wonder, would he take a little honey on it?'

Would you take a little bread and honey? Would a fish swim? You remained till the tea was over. The two ladies and their maid were a circle about you while you sat up and performed wonders in the way of paw-waving and tail-beating.

After that you were fast friends, but it was

to the older sister that you were most drawn. Perhaps this was because she talked to you.

She assured me that you and she had real conversations together, that you knew every single word she said. She said that she was almost frightened sometimes by the look in your eyes, it was so understanding. She told me that when the little maid let fall a dish and broke it you barked at her angrily, then rolled your eyes for approval. She hated trespassers and she taught you to hate them too, especially motorists who turned down the long drive, thinking it was a short cut to the lake. You and she would fly into passions over that, her delicate pink and white face outraged while she urged you to a further excess of barking.

It distressed her to see her father's grounds neglected. She would walk about them wrapped in a shawl, a straw hat set upon her cap, scolding about the untrimmed borders and sometimes picking up fallen branches and carrying them to the brush-heap. She was touched to the heart, she told me, when one day you ran forward and took up the other end of a branch in your mouth and walked beside her carrying it.

'He saw at once,' she said, 'that it was too heavy for me and he ran forward to help me.'

There was no need for her to carry the

branches. She enjoyed it, especially with you to help her. Were you helping her, or was it just a game to you? But now hardly a day passed that I did not see her making toward the brush-heap, trying not to look self-conscious and pleased, with you, very waggish, staggering beneath your end of the branch. It was a quaint sight, and quainter still when you would change your plan of going and circle round her, as if she were a pivot, till she found herself going from instead of toward the brush-heap.

What with the two families to look after and the large grounds, you had almost more to attend to than you had time for in twelve short hours. Yet on occasion you went farther afield for adventure. There were neighbours who kept guinea-fowls, and for almost a week you appeared before me each noon with a guinea-hen's egg in your mouth, which you laid unbroken at my feet. What was I supposed to do with it? Was it for my lunch? How did you know that it was of value? Yet you did know, for there was a canny Scotch twinkle in your eye as you laid it there.

One night there came a wild storm of wind and hail. The wind raged about the house, rattling shutters and beating wet branches against the walls. There was little sleep for us,

and even you were disturbed. You left your mat in the hall and came upstairs and stood by my bed. I lighted a candle and saw its reflection in your deep dark eyes. I patted you, reassured you, but I sent you back to your mat. Was I hard on you?

The next morning the corn, which had grown very tall and was taking a golden tint, lay flat on the ground ruined. Together we went to look at it, your jungle, full of mystery and danger, a waste of beaten stalks. You walked sadly along its rim but you did not enter it. You gave me that enquiring look as to a god who could, if he would, explain. Had I perhaps, for my purpose, laid it flat? All things were possible with me. You would not have been surprised, I know, if I had put out my hand and, at the gesture, each prostrate head had raised and dipped and raised again, a whispering sea under the morning sun. Nothing seemed impossible to you. More than once I saw you sitting up, with waving paws, before a bird on a bough begging him to hop down to his doom.

You became less of the puppy at play and more of the companion. We began to take long walks together. You learned to retrieve, dashing headlong after the stick, shaking it ferociously when captured, cantering back to

me, full of joy, and scarcely waiting till it left my hand before you were off again in pursuit. At sundown I would take you to the lake. It was even more joyous to swim out after the stick than to retrieve it on land. You took to the water like a spaniel. It could not be too cold nor too rough for you. You would venture out in waves that must have seemed mountains to you, and I can see you now with one end of a great rough stick in your jaws (for sometimes, to try you, I chose the roughest and largest I could find), paddling away, never giving up, till it lay on the beach. From your strong black muzzle to the tip of your 'gay' tail, you were game!

Those were fine walks back to the house at sundown through the clover field and through the orchard. You would roll in the warm grass until your coat stood up in moist black tufts, rather a silky coat for a Scottie. You would dart here and there following the scents that the dew brought from the earth, scents of strange burrows and small fugitives I could not see. As we reached the lawn you became sedate, walking close beside me with a determined and day's-work-well-done air. You would stop at the grass plot where you had your supper and give a hopeful lick or two at your empty bowl before we entered the house.

There, in the drawing-room, a wood fire blazed on the hearth. Your master sat there, his head outlined against the brightness. You went to him and put your paw on his knee and he played with your ears. 'Little dog, little dog!' You lay down before the fire, your chin on his foot, and slept.

Mollie, the chestnut, was accustomed to the distinction of a loose-box, and she resented the restriction of a stall. She bit at the manger, tore splinters from it and spat them out into the straw. Her velvet lips overflowed with complaining whinnies. She stamped upon the loose board in the floor, making it still looser. But when the boy Tom led her out with the glossy trap behind her she was herself again. She had been clipped and looked as fresh and smooth as a kid glove. Tom, with little else to do now, had got a rare glitter on the harness and the trap. Your joy came when you were lifted to the seat. A quiver that culminated in one ecstatic bark ran over you before you settled into bright serenity. Along the curve of the drive, ducking our heads beneath the lowest branch of the oak tree, we bowled. Along the road, never too fast nor too far for you. Only when we stopped you made whimpering noises, fearing that we should never start again. One stop, however, was agreeable

to both you and Mollie, the stop before the shop where they sold ice-cream. A dish was carried out to each. It was impossible to tell which devoured it with the more gusto, she, her long lip quivering over the dish, or you sweeping it with your agile tongue. Along country roads, past pine woods, your nose never still, your small body never relaxed, to the rhythm of Mollie's hoofs, to the rise and fall of her gleaming flanks, the hot sun beating down on us, the air tingling with summer. It seemed that this might go on for ever.

But, at last, we were before the house door. Tom ran forward to Mollie's head, for she seemed suddenly to feel a passion of longing for the stable she despised, and you, not waiting for the wheels to stop, bounded over them and darted into the shrubbery, forgetting all in a new joy of pursuit.

A day came when you could not go driving, and you seemed, perhaps because of unusual preparations, to realise it. You stood quietly by while the trap was brought round, made even more shining than usual by Tom. Your master was going for a drive. We watched him mount the seat and take the reins with the familiar gesture of content. One who loved horses and cared nothing for motor-cars. You watched them go, Mollie striding out as

though she felt the need of haste. You looked after the narrow, sloping shoulders of the youth, the broad shoulders of the man, then raised your eyes to my face with a doubting, troubled look. For the first time you seemed to feel the need of language, of conveying to me, in some fashion that my cruder mind could understand, your wistful sympathy. You walked sedately across the lawn beside me, and when I stretched out on the grass you touched my neck with your tongue and sat down close to me. A special kind of understanding was being awakened in you. You were beginning your study of me, and it led you to a much completer knowledge of my emotions than I could ever have of yours.

That was a long drive. It seemed that the sound of Mollie's hoofs would never come, and when the sound did come, the faint beat, and then the imminent clatter, you did not spring up with your usual joy to meet her. The bright chestnut shoulder appeared between the lilacs as we neared the drive. The breeze blew fresh and all the leaves were talking together. The master alighted and handed the reins to the boy. He was tired. Never again would he drive.

VI

It was over. Tragedy had found us, passed over us as a storm. We three who were left were prostrate in spirit as the corn lay prostrate after the storm of wind and hail. After a while the corn had raised itself toward the sun, but never again were the bowed heads so erect, never again so fearless, so certain that all would be well. Nor should our spirits.

Lemon lilies were like gold flung out in the grass, growing wild and uncared-for. The rich solemnity of midsummer lay on the land and on the lake. There was an unfathomable seriousness in your mien as you trotted about after me. It was clear that you were quite conscious of a change in the aspect of our lives, that you felt the absence of your master. In the evening we now avoided the room where we had sat about the fire together, but we kept the door ajar so that the room might not feel too remote, too bereft. But we could not bear to sit there, choosing instead a small upstairs room against the one window of which

a great cedar tree pressed, throwing all within into a greeny shade by day and holding the moon in its boughs by night.

One night, as the three of us sat together, we missed you and I went downstairs to find you. From room to room I looked and, at last, pushed open the tall white door and went into that room. All was clear in the moonlight, all reflected in the long gilt-framed mirror. Even you, small, black, pathetic in your loneliness, were reflected sitting by his chair. What need had brought you there? A longing perhaps for that courageous masculine presence; perhaps a consciousness of some essence in the room of which I was not sensible. I sat down in the chair and took you on my knees. And so we mourned together.

VII

In those days you were happiest when you were escorting all three of us for a walk. Then, with head up and tail waving, you led the way along new paths into ways not yet explored, as though to quicken us with fresh interests.

One September morning we came upon a great splash of fringed gentians on a steep sunny bank. The strange and beautiful blue flowers, never opening wide to the sun but keeping their secret of joy to themselves, brought us our first feeling of happiness. We sat down and gave ourselves up to the deep blue of them and the freshness of the wind that came steady and strong as though it would never fail of its strength. We began to plan extravagantly, as we always did, and you sat in our midst saying in your own way, with deep gazing eyes, 'I shall be there. I am the centre of all this planning.'

On the day when I first took my writing things into that room and spread them out on the table and tried to work, you followed and

lay down at my feet. That was the beginning of your share in all my work. You seemed to think that it could not go on rightly without you, and indeed this came to be so. I must have the support of your solid little presence, the intimacy of your eyes, the sympathy of your quick thudding tail on the floor when the pencil was laid down, the paper gathered up. You came to know that moment unerringly. I might fret about the room, look out of the window, or go to another room in search of something; you never budged. There you sat, doing your part, and, not till the final moment, rising to stretch, to give me a look complacent, beaming, affectionate, that sealed the morning's work.

In those days I had always a sensation of pressure in the temples, and I used, when we took our walk to the lake in the evening, to kneel by the water and choose two round stones just the right size. I would take these from the water, wet and icy cold, and hold them against my temples. Your efforts to help me were tonic. You would peer into the water, select a stone, then dig with all your might until you dislodged it. Then you would thrust your muzzle into the water, pick up the stone and lay it on my lap. One large enough, in truth, to cool the forehead of a giant.

VIII

We were moving again, returning to the city from whence we had come. A house had been taken, our furniture brought out of storage and thrown into it, with lively abandon, from the removing vans. Now there remained but to collect our personal belongings and make the journey. We decided against the train because it would have been necessary for you to travel in the luggage car, and we felt in ourselves an inability, at such a time, to reach a station at a given moment. We decided against a motor-car because they were too expensive to hire for such a long trip. We ended by making the journey in a carriage, one of the last, I am sure, in that part of the country. The thought of going so far behind horses gave an adventurous feeling that suited us. Mollie had been put out to board, the pigeons had been given away, and the moment had arrived when it seemed impossible that we should stow ourselves and our belongings into the carriage, large though it was. The old ladies fluttered

about us uttering fantastic advice. The youth Tom had erected toppling pyramids of luggage wherever possible, the driver was on his seat, the horses struck the ground with their hoofs; even you had entered the carriage, choosing the best corner, but we three did not get in. What was wrong? What was lacking? Each knew but none had the courage to speak for a space. We stood, surrounded by the bright autumn foliage, hesitating, while Tom came running with a large clock that had been forgotten, and balanced it on the top of a hamper which stood precariously on a wobbling leather hat-box. Then one spoke:

'She will be very lonely in the city.'

'Yes,' added another, 'it will be dreadful for her after the lawn and the cornfield and the orchard.'

The third said, with pretended bitterness: 'I suppose it amounts to this, that we're going to spend all that money on another dog!'

That was it, we wanted another dog. What is it in some people that makes it necessary that they have a dog beside them? That they suffer the annoyance, anxiety, agony of mind brought about by the possession of a dog. And in some, like ourselves, who want not only one dog but as many and more than they can afford or should endure. They are helpless be-

fore the urge. The other day I had a letter from a friend in Scotland. She wrote:

> 'I wonder if you know of anyone who collects Sheffield plate? I have two hot water vegetable dishes, antique, valued at five pounds each. Also a butter dish, and am hoping to get hold of a rich American! One who is making a hobby of old silver, but have not met with any success so far. I still live in hope! Of course old Sheffield plate is not easy to get now. When I *do* sell them I am going to buy a really good cocker spaniel, one which I hope some day will take prizes.'

How that letter endeared her to me, for she already has two dogs.

We looked at each other out of the corners of our eyes and smiled. It was pleasant to smile for we had not done it often of late. We climbed into the carriage and gave the driver an order. It was to drive to the house of someone whose name began with Mac who, we had been told, had a litter of white West Highland puppies for sale.

We rolled along the drive, turning a precarious corner at the gate, at which the clock began to strike, sounding a new and hollow note out in the open. At the house alighted the

one who held the purse-strings—if an expression so dignified may be applied to a thing so nebulous—and struck the knocker. We had decided to let her make a choice unhampered, for we were too exhausted physically by the removal for any hot debatement on a puppy's points.

It seemed a long while before she returned excited, flushed, her dark-blue eyes alight. She carried in her arms an eight-weeks-old West Highland puppy and, in her handbag, his long and honourable pedigree. We found that, unknown to us, she had had Tom make a little box for him with a slatted lid. Into this he was quickly put lest the sight of all this strangeness

should excite him too much and make him cry.

It was you that was excited. You snuffed the box, peered between the slats, and looked, no doubt, very large and ferocious to the small occupant within. So we set off again, it becoming more obvious with every rattle that the foundations of Tom's erection were not stable. Through one space the puppy's skinny white tail projected. Through another peered a horrified yellow eye. He sent up a succession of yelps that pierced the rumble of wheels and clatter of hoofs. We covered the box with a corner of the rug, but that only changed the yelps to quavering, heart-broken cries. So we took him out of the box and introduced him to you and you sniffed him all over. He endured this in trembling silence for a moment, then he began to scramble over us and under us, in a dreadful effort to obliterate himself. The place where, at last, he found peace was on the top of the clock. But he had scarcely settled there, with one ear up and one down, and his unusually long tongue lolling, when the clock struck twelve and, with a despairing yelp, he fell off, rolled over and over down the mountain-side of luggage, between the wheels and into the road. The driver was so intent on getting to his destination that we had diffi-

culty in making him understand what had happened. We were almost afraid to look round, but when we did, there was the puppy following us down the road, feeling perhaps that even so precarious a shelter as we offered was better than none. He had a shambling, loose-jointed trot, very different from your gay waddle at the same age. You watched his approach with an air indescribably smug and tranquil.

It was a delightful spot where we had stopped, a grassy curve in the road shaded by a great chestnut, the glossy nuts shining, here and there, on the grass. We decided that here we would have lunch.

The hamper was opened. The driver, provided with refreshment, led his horses to a level space at a distance and retired behind them, with a somewhat morose expression.

As we ate our sandwiches, two of us (and I think you might be included with these) surveyed the new purchase with derision. He had been given a saucer of milk and he was drinking it, legs wide apart, tail drooping, ribs seeming ready to start through the harsh, unhealthy-looking coat.

'And do you tell us,' we cried, 'that he is the best of the litter? And such a price! And

this what's-his-name with such a reputation as a breeder!'

Loyally she defended her choice, expatiated on his length of head, his straight forelegs, well set up under the body, the good development of rib. We agreed with that last, he was all rib.

She confided: 'I really bought him because his breeder said that he had whipped every other puppy in the yard!'

It seemed hard to believe that, but now you, full-stomached and roguish, pounced on him and rolled him over. In an instant he was one quivering bundle of vitality, of courage. You were three times his weight but he strove with you mightily, clawing, twisting, showing his small pegs of teeth in a ferocious grin. Little rotund body and little bundle of bones rolled over and over on the grass, and when he was too exhausted to move, his shallow yellowish eyes rested on you with homage and adoration, and all his short life he never swerved from that.

We made one more stop on the journey. We got tea at an inn by the way while the driver, even a shade more morose, nursed the two of you and somehow held his horses. Already the puppy had been named Hamish, a good Highland name.

When we stopped before the door of the new house it was almost dark. Two sleeping puppies, three exhausted people, two tired horses, and a driver weighed down by a livery of gloom. We dragged ourselves into the echoing house, where grotesque shapes of furniture suggested anything but a home. The driver's charge was exorbitant, the house seemed smaller than we had remembered, we had lost an umbrella on the way. We were not to spend the night here but were going to a friend's, a block away. We felt that the three of us were enough without the two of you in the house of people who were not 'doggy'. We shut Hamish in a closet with a mat to himself, and we made a bed for you in a corner of the hall. It seemed heartless to leave you alone in this strange house, but what were we to do? We locked the door and crept away, hoping you would not realise that you were forsaken.

That night, after dinner, we began to worry, fearing all might not be well in the new house. We left our friends and went through the darkness and stood outside the door. But, long before we reached it, our ears were shocked by the quavering, choking wails that came from inside. What would folk think of their new neighbours? It was a night of Indian summer and the windows in the street stood

open. We stole in and took him from his closet, and stole out past you in the hall. You had one bright eye on us but you did not move from your bed. You understood that that was your place and you would make the best of it, accommodate yourself without outcry.

He slept peacefully in our friend's house, and next morning, when we went to our own, you met us at the door, sturdy, self-reliant, waving a glad welcome with your tail.

PART II

SHORT AND MERRY

I

Looking back at Hamish and you, I am interested in the differences between you as male and female. Looking back at the long procession of dogs that preceded you, I try to distinguish between the traits of male and female. A long procession headed by the fox terrier puppy that was mine when I was two. We were a horsey and a doggy family; my father always knowing where to put his hand on a dog of any breed for himself or a friend, familiar and kindly with his horses, though not unready to trade them for a tempting offer. We often had half a dozen dogs, and

once, I believe, there were sixteen, counting a litter of Gordon setter puppies in the stable. I have known many breeds—Irish terriers, Airdales, Blue Bedlingtons, Collies, Spaniels, Yorkshires, English bulldogs—but it seems to me that the Scottish terrier has the most generous charm of all. Nature was liberal to him in giving him the heart of a big dog in a body so compact and small that he might be the perfect companion indoors and out.

These differences of male and female. Looking back over that bright-eyed, quick-breathing procession, I believe that the bitch showed greater endurance, greater adaptability, and, I hate to say it, greater greed than the dog. A sense of self-preservation, preservation of her unborn young, is innate in her. The male is more wistful, more flighty, and seldom has her soul-searching gaze that goes straight to one's heart. The bitch usually has an adventurous, devil-may-care spirit. She is very sure of herself and her place in one's affections. I would not say that one is more loyal than the other, but the only dog I ever knew which died of a broken heart was an Irish terrier male that we had to send away from us one winter that we spent in apartments. Poor Badger, shall I ever forget the

deep trouble in your hazel eyes as we put you into the crate? And yet you trusted us, sat quietly while the slats were being hammered into place, went away without outcry.

And there was another male, a cocker spaniel, that we gave away when we were moving a distance. I was a child then, but I remember how my heart ached when I heard that he had gone to our empty house every day, sat down before the door, raised his muzzle towards heaven, and uttered a howl full of sorrow, as of the end of the world. He would go then to the station, from whence we had left, and walk with sad dignity up and down the platform. One day my father returned to the town on business, and the spaniel saw his figure in the doorway of a carriage as the train drew out. He ran after the train, faster and faster as it increased its speed, his long feathered ears flying, his eyes full of anguish. I have heard my father say that he seldom had been so moved as when he saw the spaniel's strength failing. He could not endure it. He pulled the bell-cord of the train and stopped it. He alighted and gathered the spaniel into his arms. How he managed to convince the authorities that it was necessary to stop the train, I do not know.

It needs the special charm of the female to

make one forgive her some of the rascalities peculiar to her sex. I remember a handsome wheaten-red Irish terrier bitch we had. We did not rear her and were surprised at the lowness of the price for which we had been able to buy her. This was explained when, one Easter morning, she presented us with nine plump puppies—every one of them a female! This, we learned, was her invariable habit! But she was a generous soul. It was she whom I discovered standing on a table in the scullery, her nose in a bag of puppy biscuits. She had just finished one, and, at the moment when I caught her, she took out another biscuit and dropped it into the ugly, imploring mouth of the bulldog puppy who stood below gazing up at her.

Then there was Queenie, a beautiful, gentle blonde collie. Gentle, except that she always bit women in black. We had her, along with a Yorkshire terrier, Lassie, and a Maltese terrier, John. John's naturally good disposition was ruined by the responsibility of looking after these two ladies. He spent his days guarding them from real and imaginary suitors and his nights in defying the moon above their couch.

Queenie was going to have puppies, and her air was so delicate that we decided that she

should pass her nights in an unused room in the attic instead of in her kennel. Herself she led the way up the two long flights of stairs on three successive nights, but on the fourth she lay down on the bottom step apparently unequal to the exertion of mounting. Our hearts melting with pity, we picked her up, one at her head, one at her heels, and carried her to her chamber. We were quite out of breath when we reached it, for she was a large dog, and daily growing larger. But we felt rewarded by her grateful look and the gentle undulation of her plumed tail.

Night after night, week after week, we carried her up the two flights of stairs to her bed. Each morning I opened her door in a quiver of expectancy, but nothing ever happened. Each morning she met me intact, stretched her golden length in the sunlight, rolled her mocking hazel eyes up at me, then lumbered languidly down to the garden. When we had allowed her time enough in which to produce, if so she willed, a baby elephant, we lost heart and it was borne in upon us that all her ailing was but a hoax, that what she craved was to be pampered, carried about and fed on tit-bits that she might grow fatter, and more fat. So she had kept up the illusion of an interesting condition.

Not so Lassie. Almost without warning she produced two lively sons and, a few hours later, left them and ran after us for more than a mile in order to join in the gaiety of a picnic.

II

HAMISH adored you and you loved him, but you were not always kind to him. His attitude toward you was sentimental, but you had no sentiment for him and sometimes not even justice.

The two bowls of porridge and milk were set on the kitchen floor in opposite corners. He devoured his greedily, but you swept your bowl clean with a swift efficiency that I have not seen equalled. Then, with a bullet-like rush, you went for his, driving him from it with one hilarious bark. One had to be quick to catch you in time, hold you by your silver collar while he, in his cheap leather one, finished his breakfast in an anguish of haste.

You slept together on a mat in a little room behind the stairs. One night I heard that bark of yours which meant woe for Hamish, and came softly down these stairs again. I opened the door of the room and turned on the light. From here ascended a back stairway, and on the bottom step he sat with his face to the wall,

the picture of chagrin and weariness. It was a very cold room and you had curled yourself in a tight black ball on the middle of the mat. You kept your eyes shut, feigning unconsciousness. After a not too gentle cuff, you hitched your body to your own side of the mat and made room for him, your tail thudding softly on the floor to prove your good feeling. Humbly he crept back to you and laid his long muzzle on the warmth of your plump side. And so I left you.

Far too often this scene was repeated, and I fear that there were nights when the poor lad perched on the bottom step until you were so deep in dreamland that you knew nothing of his return.

Your doings were always of the intensest interest to him. Puppy though he was, he had no power of finding something interesting at every turn, as you had. This was a small house, it was a cold winter, you both were indoors most of the time. But you were always busy and he was always following you, watching with envious eyes those expressions of your temperament in which he had no part. You had an old bedroom slipper (it was new when you took it, for your own) that was a constant source of pleasurable excitement to you. It was a cat, and you worried it. It was a rat, and

you threw it up and caught it. It was a rabbit, and you rolled on it, smashing it, growling while it lay quiet, giving convulsive kicks of your hind quarters, while he stood over you, gazing down at you with dismay. You turned your back on the slipper, swaggered away from it with waving tail, wheeled, pounced on t again with a yell of triumph, snatched it up and beat yourself violently about the head with it. As your joy increased, so his dejection. 'If only I could get such a kick out of life!' he seemed to say.

But when you romped with him, all was gaiety. Over and over you rolled, black and white, growling, yapping, lying still in each other's arms, snuffling each other. Once you were both in disgrace when you were caught having a tug-of-war with a Spanish lace scarf carelessly thrown down. Once, your appetites craving stimulant, you divided a pink satin evening bag between you, leaving only a few balls of pulp. Once you devoured a dish of caramel pudding ornamented by meringue and met me at the dining-room door, each wearing a white moustache. But considering your age and your breed, ordinarily you were not too mischievous.

Hamish did not go for walks. He was too troublesome and nervous on a lead, but, twice

a day, you and I had our tramp together. Down through the park, across the icy open spaces you sped, shouting after thrown sticks. Slithering, sliding, prancing, you filled the frosty air with your joy in the game. When a heavy snowfall came you plunged into the white drifts like a swimmer into the sea, and came out looking so ridiculous that everyone who saw you smiled. You made friends with everybody and they exclaimed: 'But this breed is usually so unfriendly!' You sat up in the middle of shops waving your paws, you sat up to babies asking for their sugar sticks, you sat up to organ-grinders, asking for dear knows what!

Hamish always met you at the door, full of gladness at your safe return. You kissed, he sniffed you all over—a traveller returned from strange lands. You bore with him unless he became too demonstrative, when you snapped at him and swaggered on down the hall never heeding his chagrin.

In the evening it was your special treat to sit on the table in the living-room among the sewing and the open books, overseeing all. You did your best to understand our life and to take part in it, to give out your staunch spirit to us and to draw us closer to you. Meanwhile, in a great black armchair in the corner,

sat Hamish. He could not take part in our doings, he made no effort to understand them, but he shivered from head to foot with nerves as he watched you.

He grew as tall as you that winter, but his restless spirit kept him from putting on flesh. He was all angles, his joints stuck out, he always managed to have a neglected air. Visitors admired you, your eyes were 'almost too lovely for a dog!' About Hamish, lifting a snarling lip at them, they had nothing to say.

III

It was spring. We had taken a cottage on a northern lake for the season and the house was pervaded by the excitement of preparation. Two little dogs ran here and there urging us on, clambering into half-packed boxes in the attic, tumbling down two flights of stairs to rage at the knock of a pedlar.

Hamish made the journey in a crate along with the summer furniture, but you travelled with us in the electric train. You occupied your seat with gravity, only now and then making genial signals to a group of soldiers at the end of the car. It was war-time.

'Hello, Scottie!' sang out one, and you were filled with a sudden desire to show off.

Your eye roved along the seats and fell on a serious war-time lady knitting a sock. As though to give you an opening, she dropped her ball of wool and it rolled along the aisle. With almost feline grace, you sprang from your seat, caught up the ball and capered the length of the car with it. You exhibited your prize to the soldiers, running in and out

among their legs, enmeshing them in the yarn, symbol of the fate that had caught them. But they laughed, enjoying it. Mine was the task of disentangling you and returning the slavered ball to the lady. I apologised grovelling, as owners of dogs must learn to grovel, but she cried that you were Scotch and she was Scotch, and that it was good to be made to laugh in times like these.

It was twilight before Hamish arrived. Down the road, under the budding trees, lumbered the farmer's waggon, and, before we heard it, we heard hysterical barking. He looked starved when we released him. He ran to kiss you, to sniff you joyously, before he attacked his bread and milk.

There was a heated discussion as to whether or not he and you should be allowed out that night.

'We shall never see them again!' said one.

'We shall have a pretty night, tired as we are, worrying over them.'

'But they *must* go out sometime,' I protested. 'It may as well be now.'

I met only opposition, and all the while your bright eyes implored me, two tails, one black, one white, stiffened in anticipation. You knew I was on your side, and when the others left the room, you stayed behind with me.

Gently I opened the door, slinking I slid through it, two little dogs, fairy-like in their tread, close at my heels. We were in the broad meadow that stretched between the cottage and the farmer's house. Behind us the twilit fields rose to the wood, silhouetted against the sky. Before us, through an opening in the cedars, we saw the lake navy blue below the ruddy flare of sunset. After the city the air felt indescribably fresh and sweet. Cool evening smells rose from the fields, lively with the virgin vigour of May. Little cold waves talked together against the stones, a cow lowed, and the last swallow found his nest.

We went to the water's edge and you two drank thirstily, and I took out two small stones and held them against my temples. Hamish raised his head and looked at the red sunset. He had never seen such a thing before, or a lake, or a little pond, or a field. He was nine months old and his horizon had been the creeper-covered fence of a small back garden. He trotted up and down sniffing. I saw quivers run over his flesh as the hand of freedom stroked him. He gave me a long look and his eyes were no longer shallow but a deep intelligent hazel. He turned and looked at you and you trotted to his side. He was the leader now.

LIKE TWIN ARROWS, YOU SPED INTO THE TWILIGHT

Like twin arrows, you sped into the twilight, never faltering, never swerving, up from the shore, back through the fields, into the enticing night of the wood.

Back in the cottage I admitted faintly that the dogs were gone and that God alone knew where.

It was black night. No, it was worse than that, for grey dawn had drawn a finger across the window-pane, when trotting feet on the verandah sent a tremor along the floor of my room. I heard an impatient whine, an eager snuffle under the door, and I jumped out of bed and let the two of you in. You looked like two wolf cubs in the uncertain light, with your tongues lolling and a strange shine in your eyes. There was nothing abashed in your entrance. You had gone wild for the night and were not ashamed. You drank with extravagant haste from your water-dish and threw yourselves on the bare boards of your little room without heed for comfort. I returned to my bed justified. I had been sure you would come back.

The next morning the new life began in brave earnest. Porridge and milk gobbled. This time his plate was cleared as soon as yours, yet how his ribs stuck out! Two upturned muzzles, two grins, but how different they

were! You showed your lower teeth, your jaw thrust out, which gave your face an expression of almost ribald merriment; his upper lip lifted, in the sneer that was his smile.

'Surely you are not going to let them go again, after a night like that?' cried one.

'She has burrs on her tail, and there's dry blood on his foot!' cried the other.

But they could not stop me, not with you two grinning up at me like that.

It was sunset when you returned, and if you had tasted morsel since you left, you did not show it. During the day we had walked to the wood and tried to find you without success. We found wild flowers, we saw a scurrying rabbit or two, we heard far-off, half-mad barks, that was all. The fullness of life had overflowed in you that day. Food mattered nothing, nor home, nor love of us, only the chase, the penetrating of burrows, the return to the life for which your sires had been bred. But at sunset you came home, weary little dogs, ready to be stroked, to be held on comfortable laps, to submit to the pulling out of burrs.

Day after day the new life went on, unfolding fresh joys for you. Sometimes you came home so late that you went supperless to bed. You were as sound as two sound nuts.

One wet day you returned at noon. This time there was no gallop of feet along the verandah, but a soft padding, then a loud bark at the door. It was opened and Hamish was discovered on the sill carrying a large rabbit in his jaws, his head well up, the picture of pride. It was you that had barked and you beamed with pleasure over his achievement. Bright drops dripped from the rabbit's throat to the floor.

We cried out to him in anger, ordered him to drop his prize. This was one of the moments when the difference in your temperaments was apparent. For all his fierceness he was crushed by the disapproval of those he loved. You were feminine, you were wilful. If we did not like your ways we could do the other thing. He dropped the rabbit on the doorsill, entered the house, mounted his own chair in the corner and sat there with an expression of dignified despair. Blithely you snatched up the rabbit, flicked your heels, and bore it off to the meadow. Through the window we could see you promenading round and round, sometimes only the tip of your waving tail seen above the grasses, looking for a suitable place for the burial. He did not stir from his chair, and, when you came into the house, he shouldered the shame for the two of you and

turned away his face. Your muzzle was covered with earth. You swaggered to the drinking bowl, loudly lapped up all that was there, and barked peremptorily for more. The bowl was refilled with water fresh from the pump. You sniffed it but did not drink. It was as though you remarked, in a casual tone: 'I like a good supply on hand.'

You climbed heavily into your own chair (had you eaten of the rabbit?) and gave your cushion a thorough scratching and shaking before curling up for slumber.

IV

As the summer drew on and the heat increased, there came days when you both were willing to stay at home and take more or less decorous walks with us. You more often than Hamish, for you were plump and your coat was very thick. He was now taller than you and had a certain rakish grace. He could rarely bear to settle down, and when you had established yourself companionably beside us at tea on the lawn, he would go to you, give you a quick lick on the nose, sneeze, trot a yard or two away, sneeze again, looking over his shoulder at you. Sometimes you ignored his wiles and remained a fixture by the tea-table, sitting up and waving your paws for cake. But more often you gave in and there was a swift flight to the wood. We were scarcely sorry to see you disappear. The days you stayed at home were almost too exciting for us. From morning to night you were up to mischief. What one did not think of the other did.

I can see you now sitting side by side on the

verandah, your eyes fixed expectantly on the gap in the cedars through which you could see the road. A dog trots by, and, with two yells that sound as one, you hurl yourselves to the lawn, cross it as though shot from two catapults, dart through the gap, and in a moment come sounds of terror, rage, victory. The pair of you return trippingly across the lawn. You hate to touch the sod, you are so proud. You sit down, scarcely allowing your sterns to touch the boards, you are so keen to be up and at it again. There is an interval of the humming of bees in the clover field, of the chirping of young birds in the eave, of the gentle break of a slow wave. Then two pairs of ears are pricked. A nurse, pushing a pram, appears in the opening, another infant toddles beside. This time there is no rush, but Hamish lifts his lip in a sneer at the human young and you beat your tail and beam in approval of it. A faint chatter comes from the infants; Hamish's sneer becomes a growl. You rise, trot down to the road, and prostrate yourself before the babes. It is some time before you return, jogging contentedly along the path. There are crumbs on your lip. The infant has been sharing its arrowroot biscuit with you. Hamish meets you, licks off the crumbs, and you settle down again side by side.

Another interval of peace, then across the field comes the boy Edwin on his bicycle bringing the daily paper. This is the high spot of the day. You two precipitate yourselves with one leap into the clover blooms. You are on either side of him, raging at the pedals, trying to tear them off, passionately desirous of rending the solemn youth in twain. In Hamish's eye there is a glitter that bodes danger when he is older. But, with you, Edwin knows it is a game. One feels that if you did tear him up, you would try most certainly to put him together again.

You hated no one. Hamish hated all he did not love. Of human beings he loved me best of all. Just why this was I do not know, for I was the only one who was stern with him. He would stand before me looking up at me with wonder. When I had been away and returned, he would greet me with a whine of joy so deep that it was almost pain. He would regard me with a look as full of awe as the gaze a human being might raise toward a sunset or an approaching storm. He could never make out what I was going to do next and he made no effort to do so. He just stood and stared. You knew all about me. You were tolerant of, rather than thunderstruck at, my humours. You understood him too, from stem to stern,

but you were not always tolerant of him. With all the power that was in him he sought to understand you, to share in your peculiar ecstasies. When you caught up a green apple from the grass, tossed it, caught it, tossed it again, rolled on it barking with delight, he would sometimes find an apple for himself, walk dourly around the apple-tree with it in his teeth, and finally take it away and lose it, returning with a sheepish air. When you would lie sprawling, your belly to the sun, wriggling in sensuous enjoyment of your nearness to warm earth and warmer heaven, I have known him to lie stiffly down beside you, roll over once, then get quickly to his thin white legs, with a suspicious look around, as though he feared what the sinister powers about him might have done in the moment when he had relaxed vigilance.

I am certain that his mind was beset by dangers of which you recked nothing. I have seen the hair rise all along his spine, as he sat by your side, while you gazed tranquilly, savouring the amiability of the universe. But in your rages your two spirits were as one. By the time late summer came, 'those black and white rascals' were the terror of all the dogs about. I think it was the ferocity of your sudden rushes. You were like two wild Highlanders

charging down the glen brandishing your battle-axes. I have seen you harry a Great Dane the length of the beach, running in and out among his legs, leaping on him from either side, with snarls twice too fierce for your size. There were complaints. An angry lady came, red-faced, declaring that you had driven her spaniel, which was larger than the two of you put together, out into the lake where he had had to swim for his life. While she complained, beating the air with a tennis racquet, you two sat on the verandah regarding her, Hamish with a concentrated sneer, you with obvious delight in her fluster. You wished she would go on and on, throw herself on the grass and roll. How gladly you would have rolled with her! But you were in disgrace and I was in disgrace, and it was only when the lady's dog took to biting people that I was comfortable again.

V

The farmer who owned the land about was a 'character'. He was old, but he had the fresh complexion and vigour of a young man. He had plenty of money, but he chose to wear his clothes as long as they held together. He usually wore several shirts of different colours, and, when I first saw him, on a warm May day, he wore a great fur cap between which and a thick fan-like beard his rosy face looked out imperturbable, judicial, and bright with vanity. When he took off the cap he showed such a thatch of hair that one wondered at his needing any head-covering at all. He was rather contemptuous of his farm and liked to show his cleverness in more spectacular ways. He had a workshop on the water's edge and built boats there heavy enough to break the back of those who rowed them but strong enough to last for ever. He had built himself a launch some years before, but this year had undertaken a new one with the help of his sons.

Week in, week out, while the farm languished, the Yellands, father and sons, worked at their pleasant task. The boat, when finished, looked like an ark, fit to brave that roaring, prehistoric flood, with old Yelland, for Noah, at the helm. The soundest wood was in that boat, the best metal. When he wanted copper nails he could not buy, old Yelland made them for himself. He went to town and bought an engine for it, but the boat was so wide, of such great weight, that the engine, panting away inside, had scarcely power to move it.

It was a great day when the Yelland family set forth in this lumbering ark, with little curtains at all its windows, on a three days' cruise to pick cranberries. We stood on the breakwater watching the start. From every window of the launch a face peered out. Beards blew on the breeze and the *Gerty Lena* sidled off sidewise, like a sullen, highly varnished crab.

Little Black Devil chose the third day of the expedition for her escapade.

How did you know that the farmer and his family were away? That there was only an old bent labourer and a 'simple' servant girl at home. It was an autumn day, painted in high tones of gold and scarlet. The lake was like a dark blue bowl, its ruffled surface touched by shadows of flocking birds flying southward.

There was adventure in the air, more poignant than the adventure of Spring.

You two, we thought, had gone for the day to the woods. The distance you covered was becoming greater in these excursions. A neighbour told us that he had seen you crossing a field eight miles away, like a pair of foxes. We should soon be returning to town and your adventures would be over. But we were mistaken; your adventure was nearer home.

A sharp scratch came at the door already scarred by many such a summons. One of us flew to let you in. It was Hamish who had scratched the door. With bright eyes he stood quivering before us. Never again had he risked bringing home his quarry, but he bristled with pride in introducing you with yours. There you stood, your face as innocent as a puppy's, carrying a half-fledged chicken in your mouth. Its long yellow legs stuck out stiffly. Its skinny neck dangled, limp. You seemed to say, 'Here's the beginning of a chicken pie!'

A thump on the back made you drop it, though you did so reluctantly. You had carried it with the same care with which you had carried the eggs of the guinea-fowl. Scarce a pin feather was out of place. It

strutted across the room as though nothing had happened to it and pecked at some cigarette ash on the floor.

We looked at each other horrified. How to get it back to the farmyard? The labourer might be bent and old, the servant girl 'simple', but they knew a chicken when they saw one! The atmosphere of the farm was such that it would have been impossible to us to have returned the chicken openly. Hamish walked around it observing its peckings with a sneer. Your plump body suddenly assumed a crouching posture.

'Oh,' cried one, 'she's after it again! Don't let her have it!'

We drove you out and slammed the door upon you. Hamish leaped half-way up it crying out to follow you. We let him out.

There was only one thing to be done, we decided, and that was to house the chicken until nightfall. It might have the dogs' room, and serve them right. We lured it in with pellets of bread. Soon it perched, with distended crop, on the back of a rocking chair.

There came a faint scratch at the door. Poor little dogs, sorry for their misdeeds, pleading to be received again into decent society! One opened the door with a proper mingling of welcome and reproach.

Hamish entered, stepping lightly, a-quiver with pride. You came behind him, the same expression of idiotic purity in your eyes. In your mouth you carried the first chicken's twin sister!

The former scene was repeated with an exaggeration that was almost a caricature. The horror, the despair, the strutting, the pecking, the bread-crumbs, the taking to perch with a too-full crop.

It was a horrid day. We dared not let you out of our sight. You refused to go to the woods. Nothing interested you but the path across the meadow that led to the farm. You lay on the lawn facing it, your nose on your paws, while Hamish slept the sleep of the nervously exhausted. Inside the room where the chickens were confined, the cockerel began feverishly to practise a crow. 'De-doo-doo!' he essayed feebly, and there seemed more than a little spite in him when he chose to do it at the moment when the farm hand brought us a fresh supply of kindling, and again when the farm girl came, with tears in her eyes, to ask if we thought perhaps the *Gerty Lena* might be lost. We almost hoped it was. Indeed we had sooner mourned the loss of that flamboyant ark than have returned the chickens under Farmer Yelland's eye.

Thoughts of murder rose darkly on our disturbed horizon. How much easier to murder the little brother and sister than to smuggle them back to the farm! But who was to be the murderer? Willingly you and Hamish would have added this to your sins. One of us, like the wretch of 'milder mien' in the tale of *Babes in the Wood*, suggested taking the chickens out and losing them, but the others could not bear the thought that these two innocents, still accustomed to crowd into the coop at night with their mother, should wander about, searching for berries till they starved.

As evening closed in, sad cheepings came from the dogs' room. You two evinced an unusual desire to retire early. You scratched at the door of your room, yawning plaintively. You curled up on its threshold, your noses at the crack of the door, and sniffed as though Heaven itself were inside. There was indeed the flapping of wings, but no seraphs ever uttered bedtime crows like these.

Black night on the meadow. But, rising above the elms, a great moon, beneath whose curious light three figures stole down the path. One walked ahead to show the way, two followed with chirping chickens clutched to their breasts. It was cold, there was a drenching

dew, and the air smelled of frost. The way that seemed so easy by day was hard to find at night. Strange shapes loomed suddenly before us. What looked like a heap of wood rose with a groan, and moved away to join the other cows. Outhouses which we had never noticed before placed themselves in our path with open doors for traps. The cats of the farm surrounded us, rejoicing in our dark deeds. The gate into the barnyard was impossible to find. Round and round the dreadful fence we wistfully felt our way, but there seemed to be no break in its forbidding roughness. The pigs heard us and grunted a welcome. We heard the clumping of a horse in the mud. At last I, the longest, was chosen as the one to climb the fence.

A leg was on either side when there came the muffled beat of the engine of the *Gerty Lena* at the wharf. In no time lanterns would be moving about the yard; Noah, restored from the flood, would lead his creatures ashore. I felt my way through the darkness towards that corner where the poultry coops clustered. As I neared them soft cluckings came from within. I put my hand between the slats of one and felt the chickens small and downy beneath a sheltering breast. I sought and found another coop. In this the mother

hen could scarcely cover half her brood. She clucked expectantly. Answering chirps from the two I held told me that this was their home. I put them in between the bars and, with a convulsive movement, the hen spread her wings still wider and enfolded them.

Returning, the moon showed us an old apple-tree, silvered over by moonlight. Some of the apples lay shining in the cold grass. We each took one and stole along the meadow-path eating them. I think apples never were so crisp, so sweet as these. The noise of Noah came, shouting directions for the mooring of the *Gerty Lena*. A lantern crossed the road. At the window of the dogs' room two little faces peered out, four ears were pricked in welcome.

When we opened the door, you two hurled yourselves upon us. It had been a good day, you thought.

VI

It was hard for you to settle down in the city again. Hardest for Hamish, because all his freedom was gone. To be taken on the lead made him hysterical. Without it he was as impossible as a wolf-cub in the streets. So in and out of the back garden he dived, up and down three flights of stairs he raced, in and out of all the rooms, as though hag-ridden. Only in the evenings he was quiet, sitting rigidly aloof in the black arm-chair in the corner. He had developed greatly in the summer. His breast now looked full and strong. He held his head as though the muscles in his neck were powerful. Yet he was so thin that there was always a suggestion of airy delicacy about him. Friends said of him that he looked like the female and you like the male. But to us who were familiar with the spirits of both, you looked as feminine as, in truth, you were and all his traits were pathetically masculine.

You still harried him when you were in the mood. There were times when you denied

him the dignity of his own chair. You would rush at him without warning, uttering a sudden complaining scream, that made him leap over the arm of the chair in panic. He would retire to a corner glowering while you would hop into his place and set about licking your paws till every ebony toe-nail shone. In the meantime he would establish himself, trembling, on the farthest chair. And, after a bit, something approaching serenity would appear in his eyes. Out of your deep dark ones you were watching him. You waited for that moment when his nerves relaxed, then, with another scream, you were after him. And so every chair he sought in turn.

But, when he chose, he had character. He was master and you knew it. This was where his share in me was in question. He and I had one pleasure we shared with no one else. The pleasure, I admit, was on his side; on mine it was mostly compassion and tenderness for him. This was to sit together on the end of the sofa and look out through the window of the drawing-room into the street. The curtain must be well drawn back, regardless of crushing it, so that nothing should obstruct the view. I must sit near enough the end to leave barely room for him to stand, his sharp elbows resting on the slippery mahogany arm of the

sofa, his chest pressed forward till he sometimes lost his balance and I only saved him from a fall by grasping his spiderish hind legs.

That room was one of the coldest I have ever known. When a spell of zero weather came, we used to shut it up and sit in the dining-room, but rather than that he should miss this particular joy, I would retire there with him and stay until I could endure the cold no longer. I must be near enough to him for our bodies to touch. He needed the reassurance of that contact, when he looked out on a world so strange, exciting to the point of hysteria. I would feel the stiffening of his spine, the bristling hackle, as a dog passed down the street. A group of dogs playing in the snow would enrage him till his barking made them turn and stare at the window. He would be beside himself till they had sauntered off, when he would settle down again on his breast-bone to follow each pedestrian, each motor-car, with his eager eyes. But always alert for the moment when another dog should appear.

Sometimes you would follow us into the drawing-room and stand up with your paws against my knee, making as though to join us. It was then that he would turn on you with a snarl so ferocious, a sneer so terrible, that you

quickly retired and sat down on the floor, regarding him with submission in which there was the hint of mockery. You knew that you might, perhaps within the hour, trot along that (to him) so fabulous a highway, be the admired centre of just such a group of dogs as had now driven him into a fever.

He might have spent hours by the drawing-room window alone, but he would never go there except in my company. And the moment I rose from the sofa, no matter what might be passing in the street outside, he jumped down without hesitation and escorted me from the room, his bearing at these moments being one of dignified melancholy.

This was the winter when you ran away. What a fright you gave us! You had been turned into the garden as usual when the house was opened in the morning, but it was not noticed that the gale of the night before had blown open a back gate. When we came down to breakfast you were not there to meet us, and the open gate showed how you had gone. Every boy to be found was set searching. We walked till we were weary on false trails. The house was a hollow shell, echoing the restless movement that had raced through it. Consternation was in our hearts. We were bereft, not of two little devils, but of two small

beings so perfect that sprouting wings had swept them away. We wrote advertisements for all the evening and morning papers. We advertised you separately and as a pair. 'Scotch terrier, bitch, wearing silver collar.' 'White West Highland terrier, wearing plain leather collar.' 'Two terriers, White West Highland and Black Brindle Scottie, male and female.' And, of course, warnings to those who might detain them; and, of course, rewards to those who returned.

The day passed somehow between doleful recallings of the enchantment of your presence and sudden rushings into the street after dogs that resembled one or the other of you. The evening and the night were like eternity. They were like nothing at all. We lay awake listening to the house crack under the frost. It was the coldest time of the winter.

Breakfast, with no waving paws or bright eyes begging for toast and bacon. The postman with letters which no one cared to read. A morning paper that held no interest because no one advertised a terrier found. Weary speculations as to whether or not you had survived the bitter night. Towards tea-time a ring at the door, and the arrival of the man (he seemed more god than man) who came to tell us that you were safe and sound.

He was a carpenter living on the outskirts of the city quite three miles away. When he had gone home to his lunch, his wife, with an air of great mystery, had led him to the kitchen window and shown him two small dogs in the yard. They had run in there, she told him, just after he had left for work before seven. They had run gambolling, leaping about the yard. She had seen at once (God bless her for that!) that they were not common dogs, and had run and bolted her gate, shutting them in. She had tried to make friends with them, but the white one had frightened her by his fierce looks and she had not ventured into the yard. The man had carried food to them, and the black one had eaten as though famished and had let herself be stroked, but the white one had gone into a corner and stood there snarling. The man had gone out and bought a morning paper and found the advertisement. He told all this in a rambling, excited way.

It was a Saturday afternoon and it was not easy to find someone to fetch you. At last we were driven to hire a small lorry. Hamish's crate was put on this, and before dark we had you back again. It had taken the carpenter and the driver of the lorry together to catch Hamish and put him in the crate.

What a strange glamour there was about you

two when once more you gambolled through the house! Mystery surrounded your doings for those twenty-four hours. How had you crossed all those innumerable streets and not lost each other? What miracle had saved you from death in those crossings? Had St. Francis, lover of animals, given a thought to you? In and out, up and down, you had stayed together. Somewhere in the bitter cold you had huddled together in the night. Were you afraid? Had you longed for home? Or did the great gust of freedom bear you along as two happy leaves? I pictured you running into the strange yard in the red winter sunrise, leaping, playing in the snow, with stomachs as empty as sea-shells.

Hamish's ribs looked as though they would come through the skin. He was like a little famished white wolf. What a dinner we gave you! Vegetables, meat, and brown gravy, with a piece of toffee each to cap it off. You slept all the next day. There was no play in you.

After that there was something new in your relations to each other. You had shared strange dangers. You had passed a night of mystery in unknown streets. You would retire into a corner, sit close together, seeming to recall something.

Even when you romped together to the

music of a gramophone record (a fox-trot put on specially for you), moments of abstraction would still your gambols. You would lie in a tranced embrace, looking into each other's eyes, remembering, I feel sure, that day and night of vagabondage.

VII

When spring came we made one of those swift decisions of ours. We would part with Hamish. Sell him to someone living out of town, where he would have more freedom to develop as he should. All winter he was a prisoner, and in summer his wildness was such that we felt he was bound to get himself, and possibly you, into serious trouble. We advertised him for sale, and, in what seemed an incredibly short time, a breeder of West Highland terriers came to the house, bringing with him a friend. They examined his pedigree. They examined him, at a safe distance, bending on him looks of solemn admiration. And well they might, for he stood before them like an old hand at dog shows, his head erect, his tail up, his forelegs as though chiselled. One would have thought he wanted to be sold, and yet I knew that he was just one nerve of watchfulness against this new danger.

The breeder explained that he had a nice place in the country and wanted a young stud

dog. He agreed to the price we demanded with a promptness that was a shock. It was all being so dreadfully easy, this parting with a member of our little circle. You felt the tension, for you ran and found your old slipper and shook it and beat yourself about the head with it. You threw it down and barked.

'Well,' said the man, 'is it settled, then?'

The one with the dark-blue eyes answered, clasping her hands tightly: 'No. I'm afraid not. I've changed my mind. We shan't sell him after all.' She looked from one to the other of us and we smiled agreement.

'But,' he persisted, 'you advertised him, didn't you?'

'Yes, yes,' we agreed, and we pointed out to him how foolish it was to believe everything one read, and how impossible it was always to feel the same on a given subject, and how the advertisement was really nothing much more than a whim. Being a true lover of dogs, he understood perfectly. He and his friend remained for two hours, and we talked of nothing but dogs.

There were a number of answers to the advertisement. With each one we grew prouder of Hamish, more pleased with ourselves that we had not parted with him.

May came and the removal to the cottage.

We could not afford this luxury, but it was difficult for us to get used to doing without things. And, as if by a miracle, each autumn of the years we went there, I sold a story that paid the rent. So we considered that the cottage cost us nothing at all.

It was a hot June, and when we reached July the heat grew torrid. We lived in and out of the water. To swim beside us filled you with gladness. Your sleek head like a seal's bobbed up and down in the waves, but Hamish stood on the rocks, with lifted paw, terror in his eyes. Once or twice we carried him out and ducked him, but he suffered so that we let him be and he shivered away on his rock undisturbed. But all this was changed when his anger was roused.

A family who lived along the shore owned an English setter that you two had chosen for your enemy for the season. He refused to fight. Every time you attacked him he galloped home, with a rollicking air, his long tail streaming, as though it were a game! You would show him whether or not it was a game!

We were sitting on the shore in the cool of the evening. The cedar trees stood all black about. In and out of them dipped the bats. Across the faint ruddiness of the water a canoe

YOUR SLEEK HEAD BOBBED UP AND DOWN IN THE WAVES

slid near enough for us to hear the drip from the paddles. In the stern, with an air of hauteur, sat the English setter. When the double challenge shot across the water to him, he did not even turn his head. His silken ears hung like drooping sails. You two scrambled over the rocks shrieking your rage. The space between you and him widened without effort on his part. He simply sat there looking his disdain, being gently wafted from your reach.

It was too much. Hamish plunged into the water and swam straight out after the canoe. And after him you. Snarls smothered in water came back to us. You would have clambered into the canoe and dragged your victim out had not those who paddled been too swift for you. Your heads were just two dots on the surface of the lake.

You shook yourselves and drops flew all over us. Your teeth gleamed in triumphant grins, for, in your minds, you had obliterated him. Into the chasm of night you had forced him to disappear. He would never be heard of again.

Next day Hamish was as terrified of the water as ever.

VIII

It was a pretty sight to see you leaping about each other in the long grass of the meadow for the sheer joy of being together. There were no more quarrels.

That summer you attained the full flower of your early doghood. You were slower to mature than Hamish, for now he was twenty months old and you two and a half years. The differences in your temperaments were always evident. His haughtiness and reserve; your geniality and independence. His dread of doing anything to which he was not accustomed; your adaptability, your capriciousness. He stood with one paw lifted, spurning the ground. You regarded the earth as a solid basis for your activities. He was tractable with those he loved; you were obstinate, seeming to say, 'How can you possibly know what is best for me so well as I do?' Unrest shadowed his hazel eyes, while a deep tranquillity glowed in your dark-brown ones.

One was always wanting to pick you up and

cuddle you, but sweet languor was not to your taste. You would droop for a moment, all curves, then a stout kick in the stomach encouraged the one who restrained you to place you again on your own short legs. Hamish yearned to be nursed, but who cared to nurse a creature all angles, whose rigid legs it seemed impossible to bend? But occasionally I did hold him on my knees. There he would sit bolt upright, very happy, the parts of him that touched me seeming very sharp. The weather grew insufferable. Hot night succeeded torrid day.

One night I could not sleep. I got up in the light of the sinking moon and went out of doors. There had been a dew and the coolness of moist grass was pleasant to bare feet. A deep stillness lay on the lake and the trees, but a movement, palpable as a light breeze, rose from the earth. I went around to your room and looked in at the window. I thought it must be very hot in there for you, under the sloping roof. I could just make out the two little figures. You had got on to a large rocking-chair which we had put in there because we disliked it, and were rocking yourself gently, seeming to express the thought, 'Well, as I cannot sleep, this will help to pass the time.' On the floor facing you sat Hamish, in the

dolor that overcame him when you did such inexplicable things.

In an instant you had both discovered me and were at the window, tearing at the screen, whining the distressfulness of your situation. I pulled out the screen and lifted you over the sill, receiving two swift licks of gratitude in the passing.

We were like beings transformed out in the night together. We ran and leaped in the meadow. We went to the lake, and you drank, while I plunged my arms into its coolness. You scrambled over the rocks after a water rat, while I squatted listening to the sweet awakening of the first bird and saw the moon disappear.

He was more deeply happy than I have ever known him. He would not stay long from my side, but kept looking up, his tongue trembling with eagerness, as though he were trying to thank me for what I had done. When I went back to bed I left you out, and all that day you spent in the woods. In the evening we had guests, and long green Chinese lanterns were lighted on the verandah. Hamish made friends with no one. He sat on an end of a bench in a corner. Someone noticed how beautiful he looked sitting there, in the greenish light of the lanterns, as though cut out of marble. We

all stood about staring at him, admiring him. There was a nobility in him that kept us from smiling.

The next morning was delightful. A cool breeze had sprung up from nowhere. The branches waved; the lake was ruffled and sang against the stones. I gave you two your breakfast and you set off for the day, trotting side by side along the walk from the kitchen door, scrambling through the break in the fence, and cantering up the incline of the pasture where the Jersey cows grazed. I followed you with my eyes along the brightness of a stubble field, still side by side, then he was lost because of his whiteness. I saw you, a moving black speck, then you too were gone.

We were surprised when, in not much more than an hour, you returned alone, but we were not alarmed. Some caprice, we thought, had brought you back. Some remembered bone that must be dug up and transferred to another spot. Then we began to notice that you were not quite yourself. You lay very quietly, your chin on your paws, in an attitude of intense watchfulness.

'Where is Hamish?' we asked.

You looked at us and then away, as though you shrank from meeting our eyes.

'Go and find Hamish!'

You rose, went to the open door, sniffed the air, then threw yourself on your side and remained so with wide open eyes staring before you.

Still it was not until late afternoon that we became alarmed. Then we walked through the fields and meadows to the wood. And as though against your will you followed us. Your eyes were troubled, and, when you moved from our side, you ventured only a short distance, and then with a doubtful air, as though you saw your haunts in a new aspect. We went here and there through the woods calling his name, that fierce Scottish name which suited him so well. 'Hamish! Hamish!' But no answer came.

We slept little that night, expecting every moment to hear the padding of his feet along the verandah floor. We called from one room to another, 'Did you hear anything?' and 'Was that his bark in the distance?'

Next day you refused to leave the house. We set the boys of the countryside searching. As the sun was going down I was on the shore, when two boys rowed up in a skiff. One of them asked:

'Is this the place a white dog was lost from?'

'Yes.' And I knew from the boy's face that Hamish was dead.

They had found his body by the roadside not far away. He had been struck by a motor-car, and his body had been thrown into a ditch and lay almost concealed by the long grass.

He was rigid when we carried him home, set in the attitude of running. His lip was raised in the old sneer, as though in contempt of those who had killed him. Edwin, the boy who delivered our paper and whom Hamish disliked more than any other being, was the one to dig his grave. We stood together in a corner of the field while, with ill-concealed relish, he struck his spade into the stony ground. He said:

'He was bound to come to a bad end. I always said to myself he would. If some*thing* hadn't killed him, some *person* would,' and his look intimated that he might well have been the person.

The ground was hard and Edwin was soft, so the grave was shallow. But it was wide enough for him to be laid in, still in his attitude of fleetness, his beautiful body white and unstained except for a bruise on the head. So we covered him and his sneer and returned to the cottage with heavy hearts.

I wilfully recalled things that hurt me, as one does when one has lost what one loves. I recalled the time when he had waited outside

the door full of pride, a rabbit in his mouth, bringing his quarry home to us. And we had scolded him for it. . . . I remembered how, a month ago, I had made up my mind to punish both of you for running after motor-cars and horses. I had got a bit of strap and promised whippings for every offence. The promise soon had to be fulfilled. You had received the blows on your stout little body with stoicism, had shaken yourself almost off your feet when all was over, and then trotted along the flower border with dignity, pretending that all was well and that your pride had not been hurt. But Hamish had been crushed. Freed from my hand he had crept under my chair and sat there shivering, oblivious of everything but his misery, his shame. After a while my hand had dropped from my book (with what little enjoyment I had read!), and he had just touched it with a timid tongue. Oh, pleading, timid tongue of a little dog wanting to be loved again!

Never again, I had said, would I whip either of you, and I never did. But gentle cuffings had to be given to both when you chose to gambol in your own room at night, disturbing the house with your leapings, your growlings, and your barks of delight. And little either of you cared for such cuffings. You took

them as part of the game, which I had risen from my bed to join in. You nozzled, you bit, you kissed the hands that sought to curb you. And, as likely as not, you were at it again by the time I was back in my room.

When he was gone, did you think of those times, as you lay looking straight before you with an expression of impenetrable sadness? Never again did you go to the wood, but when we would say, 'Where is Hamish?' you would rise and walk to the end of the path. You would lift your head, with ears pricked, and your nostrils would quiver as though you sought the scent of those flying, eager feet.

PART III

THE SHADOW

I

The next summer I went on a long visit. Again we had taken the cottage by the lake, and friends were staying there in my absence. On my return the first moments were given to them, and I had barely time to notice your exquisite delight at having me back again. You uttered little cries that were painful. The fullness of your heart seemed almost too much for even your sturdy little body. But we were alone together at last, and I took you on my knee and stroked you and looked into your eyes.

I was startled at seeing that they were running, those eyes that had always been of a beautiful clearness. I examined them more closely and discovered, on the iris of each, a

grey speck no larger than the head of a pin. Worried, I went to question the others. They told me the condition had appeared about a fortnight before, from a cold, they thought. No one had noticed the specks on the iris. A feeling of apprehension shadowed my homecoming for me.

I sent to town for a remedy and used it faithfully. At first you objected to the treatments, but after a little, you learned to sit quietly for twenty minutes at a time with hot compresses across your eyes. You were full of health and good spirits.

By the time we returned to town the grey film, as thin as smoke and quite unnoticeable to the casual observer, had covered your eyes. Your sight seemed as good as ever. I took you to the veterinary, and you sat, serious and well-behaved, on a chair in his office while we discussed you. He was very cheerful about you and foretold the trouble would soon be over, and gave me drops to be used morning and night. I was to take you back to him in a couple of months.

That winter I was encouraged by what I thought was an improvement. The film was disappearing, but a strange thick darkness shadowed the clear depths of your eyes. And you had become quieter, often raising your

face to mine with a puzzled look, as though trying to understand some strangeness that had altered the aspect of life for you. Yet the visits to the veterinary were encouraging. All I had to do was to persist in the treatment.

The next summer (we were again by the lake) I noticed that you did not find the sticks I threw for you quite so readily. Your walk was not quite so jaunty, or the carriage of your tail so gay. The puzzled look in your eyes increased.

It was a cold autumn, yet we stayed late at the cottage. There was a feeling of shrinking from that return to town. The discomforts of the country did not seem to matter. We were in a kind of trance while the trees reddened and the great clouds of autumn sailed across the deep blueness of the sky. In the corner where Hamish lay buried, a tall clump of golden rod was a deeper yellow than any other autumn flower, darker than the gold of the stubble fields. Sometimes the haze from northern forest fires came down to us, smelling just pleasantly acrid, sweet after that long purifying passage. We wanted no outsiders. We sat together enthralled by old books. We read aloud, I remember, a very old copy of *Don Quixote*—strange print and stranger pictures.

Nearly a thousand pages of it. You had your own chair and sat there gravely, no matter how long we read, but when the book was put aside you gave a bark of delight and ran toward the door. When it was opened you stood on the threshold and looked out with an air of puzzlement.

When at last we went home and I took you to the veterinary, he said:

'Why, I must tell you that this little dog is more than half blind!'

He passed his hand quickly before your eyes. Your head turned after it. You raised your face wistfully to his.

'She sees me,' he said. 'She sees more than I had thought.'

II

We were walking on a busy street. You trotted close beside me, as though to gain confidence from my nearness. You walked with a peculiar, uncertain lightness, as though the earth no longer felt solid beneath you. A lorry thundered by and you shrank at the end of the lead, straining to escape from the sudden terror. We came to the crossing which so often you had traversed with an air that said: 'The policeman has held up his hand for me. The traffic has been stopped for me.' Now you hopped down from the kerb with a queer little jolt, then turned round and faced the other way, straining to return home. I picked you up and carried you in my arms. How gladly you threw yourself against my shoulder. I felt the thudding of your tail on my side. I carried you until we were in the quiet street that led to the park.

At home I said, 'It is getting worse with her,' and I told the others what had happened.

We watched you drinking from your dish,

young, healthy, glossy-coated, and it seemed impossible to believe that anything could be wrong with you.

One said: 'We can't let it go any farther. I had rather have her done away with.' It was said almost in a whisper. We felt like conspirators and our hearts were wrung.

Soon after that one of us was taken ill. She had come home from the house of a friend tired and feverish. She went to bed and I sat by the window waiting for the other one, who had also been out, to return. The sun was setting, and the snow, of which there had been a fresh fall that day, was flushed pink upon its fairness. The shadows were intense and blue. She came down the street a slender, very erect figure in black furs. The fairness of her clear-cut face was flushed pink like the snow. When she came in I told her the ill news and her blue eyes became dark with concern. There was an epidemic in the country. The feeling of apprehension which for those dark years had lived with us, and had of late withdrawn, now returned like a cloud.

It was scarcely three days before we others were taken ill. It was scarcely three weeks before the one with the dark-blue eyes had gone from us. . . . I lay on a couch convalescent. You had got up beside me and were sitting very

close to me. I put out my hand and found a match on the little table where there were things for smoking. I struck it and held it close to your eyes. You did not flinch. You drew nearer, sniffing. I threw away the match and gathered you close. Ah, how you pressed against me! In the quietness we sat together facing the new life. You were in physical darkness; my darkness was spiritual. A sympathy deeper than that of look or speech passed between us.

PART IV

THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

I

In June I took you to New York with me. In the intervening time you had miraculously recovered your courage. For a while it had failed you when you were cut off from the light, when you could no longer see the pageant of moving things that stirred you to anger or delight, when you must face a long dark corridor of days swept by the winds of the unknown.

But now your courage had come back to you, and, with its coming, self-confidence grew day by day. You learned your way about. You learned to run up and down the stairs and in and out of the house as though nothing were amiss with you. I was even deceived into thinking that your sight was returning, and took you to the veterinary with a new hope. But he said that you were only training your other senses to take the place of the lost one.

He caressed you and you grinned up at him, showing your white teeth in a kind of bravado.

It almost seemed as though zest were added to certain of your activities. In your play with your old shoe, for instance, a new ferocity was added. You would worry it till it seemed that it must fly to pieces. You would growl deeply at it, as though you said: 'Me, afraid? Never! And I'll show this old shoe. . . .'

Your re-establishment in life was complete. To anyone who knew you, overbrimming with health as you were, the idea of putting you away because you could not see would have appeared an act of stupid cruelty.

Every day your hearing became more sensitive. The minutest sound that had any bearing on your daily routine became significant to you. If I opened a certain drawer in my desk and took out my purse, opened it to see what it contained, you had leaped to the floor in an instant and were at my side, though the moment before you had been curled up on your chair apparently sound asleep. You knew that that sound portended marketing and its delights. The butcher's, and the bone bought for you. The bake-shop, where you had only to sit up, waving your paws, and a little sweet cake would be put before you. The grocer's, and the evil converse with his great grey cat.

Best of all, the fishmonger's! I can see his inscrutable, unsmiling face as he weighed the fish, affecting to ignore you. Then suddenly he seemed to become aware of your pawing on his apron, of your whimperings that were now becoming outraged cries.

'Ha,' he would exclaim, his long knife poised, 'what's this? You want fish? Well, I declare.' And he would cut off the daintiest morsel of cod and toss it to you. It had scarcely reached the sawdust before you had it.

But there was a new wistfulness in you. Now you needed reassurance, desired approval. Before you would romp with your shoe you must take it to each of us, walking up and down between the two of us, pressing it in turn against us for a moment. If there were half a dozen people in the room you would make the rounds, displaying your victim to each in turn before you tortured it.

We had not been in New York a day till you had become familiar with that house from end to end. Those of the house knew that you did not see perfectly, but they never guessed that you did not see at all. Something in me shrank from telling that to anyone. You soon knew all about the strange streets. I would unsnap the lead and you would run ahead of me up and down the lawns, going to the limit of

the prescribed walk, then retracing each corner of the way. Yet you were no more suited to a great city than I. I know you longed for the country and that your instinct turned northward. I know that I longed achingly for the country. The courage that lightened your darkness did not lighten mine.

'Where is Hamish?' I would ask you. And you would raise your muzzle, always toward the north, and whine. You had not forgotten his name, nor the land where you had sped through fields and woods together. At the mention of that name, did a vision come to you of that swift white body racing against the gloom?

II

The day we left New York was one of the hottest I have ever experienced. In the streets there was nothing to breathe, and in the Grand Central it was even worse, for the very breath one had was drawn from one's body, leaving it collapsed. People seemed in a trance. The marble rooms were sepulchres in which they had been prematurely buried. The negro Red Caps were evil spirits just rousing one to a realisation of the horror. I remember putting a coin in a slot to get you a little paper cup of iced water, you so low down among the thousands of unseen echoing feet.

Leaving Canada it had not been necessary for you to wear a muzzle, but here it was the law. For a week I had been trying to persuade you to endure it for a little while each day, but you refused to have anything to do with it. You tore at it, you stood on your head in it, you prostrated yourself with your paws in

an attitude of prayer above it. In this heat I knew that it simply could not be done. I told the official so in words few but trenchant. 'I have the muzzle here,' I said, 'but I had rather wear it myself than. . . .'

The man was an angel in disguise. He smiled through his sweat and let us pass on to the baggage-car.

The thick padded seats of the railway carriage, the blackness of my black dress, the jolting, the soot, the journey through innumerable carriages to carry your dinner to you. The clinging to the wide door of the baggage-car in the life-saving draught from it. The throwing out of half the dinner (the waiter had given me enough food for a bloodhound), the giving to you of a cool drink from the baggage-man's own tin cup. There you stood, fastened to the handle of a trunk, tiers and tiers of them above you so that you looked like a midget in a grotesque city of skyscrapers.

I learned that all the baggage was to be transferred from this train to another at Rochester, or some such place, at three in the morning. A man who was getting off there promised me that he would see that you were safely transferred to the other train and gently handled. But I lay awake listening to the

THERE YOU STOOD, FASTENED TO THE HANDLE
OF A TRUNK

thunder of luggage being hurled about by callous powers of darkness, and wondered what you were doing. I pictured you, small, dignified, enduring discomfort without complaint. Voices shouted in the station, lights flashed. If only I knew that you were safe in the other train!

I did not sleep again. I was one of the first on the platform. I looked about eagerly to see if I were being met. I saw her then, coming toward me, a bright wing of hair under her black hat. We embraced, then flew to search for you.

The second train was in. It was at this platform; no, it was at that! The baggage-car was at this end; no, it was at that! All the luggage had been put off; no, it had not been disturbed!

'What's wrong with this here country,' said a black porter of the train, 'is that it's away behind the times.'

We found the man in charge of the baggage.

'Have you seen a Scottie anywhere?'

'Why, yes'm. He's right in here singing *Annie Laurie*.'

And there you were! And you were indeed raising your voice in howls that were not unmelodious. In a few minutes we were in a taxicab together.

III

We had taken a small cottage on an island in a northern lake. Here your return to good spirits and courage was made complete. You went for walks with us through dense and pallid woods of poplars in search of little hidden lakes. You stood in the bow of the row-boat, poised for a spring at the first touching of land. Only when we went in the canoe you were not allowed to come. Then, as we floated on the placid darkness of the water in the dusk, we heard the rhythmic mourning of your howl. You began it when you heard the first dip of the paddles, and never ceased until the canoe shivered back against the little wharf.

Our nearest neighbour owned a beautiful Yorkshire terrier named Toots. On our first day he came into the cottage with a cheery, welcoming air. But the cottage was yours and you had two precious human beings to guard. You flew at him with a snarl and rolled him over on the floor. He was not hurt, but his feel-

ings were wounded and he did not forgive you. Later on you tried to make up to him, especially when you found that he owned a comfortable and swift-moving motor-launch. You loved speed. Movement could never be too fast for you, and the slowing down of it always produced a whine of disapproval.

You walked up and down before Toots, showing off your physical charms; you took short steps, carried your tail high, and grinned at him. But with only a pained look he lifted his nose in the air, disdaining you. When we went in the launch you sat side by side with him, and you were always conscious of each other, you trying to make him forget that you had bitten him, he refusing to forget. His disdain baffled you. You were always so sure of your power to charm. I remember once when he and his owner, you and I, were out in a storm. The heaving water was brightened every now and again by flashes of lightning. Waves broke across the bow, drenching us. It seemed that the gale must drive us on the rocks. Yet you and Toots thought of nothing but each other, you making up to him, he disdaining you. Poor Toots, it was not so long after that when he met the death that befalls so many of our pets now. He was killed while crossing the street.

It was a long paddle from our cottage to the supply-boat from which we bought our provisions. Twice a week you were shut indoors while we made the trip. But one day it was so hot (the thermometer registered 100° in the shade) that we had not the heart to leave you a prisoner. You were stretched out on a patch of shady moss, asleep, when we crept into the canoe and slid out on the lake, which was like a burnished pewter dish, flat, lifeless under the beating sun.

We had rounded the nearest point and were crossing a little bay when, in the forest which was dense with undergrowth, we heard a faint barking. We rested our paddles and knelt motionless, listening. The barks, wild as though uttered by some creature of the forest in pursuit of his prey, drew nearer. At last we heard a small crashing in the underbrush, we saw a small dark figure on the shore.

'It is she!' we whispered.

It was almost impossible to believe that you could have crossed diagonally that unbroken stretch of forest where you had never been, where there was no scent to follow, and emerged on the shore exactly opposite us. You, to whom it was all a formless waste!

We talked in whispers, wondering what we should do. Certainly we could not take you in

the canoe. You were too restless, too subject to sudden caprices of movement. You gave us little time for debating. You were in the water gallantly swimming out to us, your wet face lifted to the glare of the sun. We called to you and you gave a yelp of joy at the sound of our voices.

'Go back!' I shouted. 'We are coming!'

There was no hesitation. You understood that you were not going to be left in anguished desolation while we sped away in that cruel canoe. You turned and rather slowly, for you were almost exhausted, swam toward the shore.

We put the canoe in the boat-house and went through the woods to meet you. It was not easy going for there was no path here. At last we heard you uttering little broken cries, and called to you that we were there. You could scarcely get to us, you were so done, but with what forgiving joy you met us! You raised your head and gave a kind of bay, musical, like that of a fox-hound. You seemed to feel that you must make some entirely new noise expressive of your thanksgiving and deep joy. From that time on, that musical bay became your way of expressing high emotion, and I never heard it without a melting of the heart toward you.

There was scarcely an inch of you that was not scratched by brambles. You were bleeding in half a dozen different places. As for us, when we had accomplished our second journey in the heat, brought home our meat and bread, our fruit and melted butter, we were in truth only sun-scorched wrecks of what we once had been.

IV

We had bought a piece of woodland where once had stood the primeval pine forest. That had been cut down long ago, and in its place had grown up straight young oaks, graceful maples, poplars and silver birches the gleaming trunks of which gave the place a mysterious, fairy beauty. This was your happy hunting-ground for the rest of your life. We built a cottage there for the summers, and as the doors stood always open, you had the joy of going in and out and up and down at will. You were very happy. If you thought about it, you doubtless thought that life there would go on for ever, in earthy, grassy, sun-warmed monotony, offering you the sounds and scents you loved to follow. You learned to know every foot of the wood. You made your own intricate paths between burrow and burrow, and they all led at last to the seclusion of the ravine where you buried your favourite bones.

How clearly I can see us journeying to the cottage on a May morning, motored there by

some friend, his car crammed with our belongings, and you, standing with paws on the door and blown-back whiskers, straining toward the moment of arrival. When the car stopped and you were put down, we laughed to see how you set out without a moment's hesitation to explore your domain, see that all was in order after the long winter. You would make the round of your paths, perhaps start a rabbit and tumble after it for a space, but you always ended in the ravine to dig up the last bone of the bygone season. You would appear at the door with this pallid prize in your distended jaws, earth on your nose, and deep pride in the resounding bay you uttered as you laid it down before us. You smelled of bracken, for you were always rolling in it. Patches of glossy wintergreen were your playground, where you tossed and chewed the dilapidated tennis ball that was yours.

You loved Jacob the gardener, and in his undemonstrative way he loved you. The day began with his arrival. We would be woken by the clump-clump of his feet along the drive. Then came the sound of his wheelbarrow and garden tools being brought out. He had crossed the lawn, the clump-clump of his feet had approached the house, then gone back to the garden. He was raking, he was

digging, he was running the lawn-mower. Whichever it was, it was the signal for you to rise. I let you out. I heard him say to you, 'Ha, I thought you were going to sleep all day!'

When, at last, I went out I could see neither you nor Jacob. You had disturbed me, you had got me out of my bed. Having done your duty, you had moved your activities elsewhere. On the doorstep lay Jacob's offering of a nosegay. He had picked it on the way to work. If early in the season, it was lupin or columbine or trillium. If late, blue gentian, Black-eyed Susan, or Michaelmas daisies. The nosegay was always tied tightly with grey yarn. Lovely flowers still wet with dew, on the door-sill.

I could see smoke in a blue-grey spiral between the trees. Jacob was burning brushwood or dead leaves. I went toward the smoke spiral, now in glittering sunshine, now in the rich intense shade of the early morning. I saw Jacob's shirt more blue than the smoke, as he heaped fresh brushwood on the fire. And I saw you close beside him. There was a kind of understanding between you.

V

You had trained your other senses to do you such good service that it seemed impossible to believe that you could not see. I would throw your stick for you the length of the drive, and, straight as an arrow, you would be after it with a volley of barks. A few snuffles and you had found it and were galloping back with the movement of a rocking-horse. Again and again you retrieved it, until at last, tired of the game, you lay down with your paws across it and strove to tear it to pieces. Your good spirits were unfailing, your courage all regained. The two great fights of your life (and what unequal fights they were) took place after you had lost your sight.

Beyond the ravine lived a handsome English setter bitch. She was usually kept tied and I had never seen her near our grounds until the day of the fight. I was standing by the delphinium border, from where I could look down the road. You had been away for some time and I was a little anxious, as I always was when you stayed away long.

Presently I saw you coming down the road, not trotting with an important mien as when returning from business of your own, not galloping like a happy rocking-horse, but rushing like a black streak with the great white setter in pursuit. As I watched, you reached the far end of the drive. You were on your own territory. You turned and, with a savage cry, faced your enemy. She threw her great weight on you. You were on your back, but you were fighting with the demon that possesses Scotties when they throw their whole soul into a combat. She was angry, but you were unrecognisable in your savagery. Such a fight could last but a few minutes. Snarling, she threw you off at last. In another instant your head was between her jaws, and you would have been killed had we not been there to drag her off. Her master arrived on the scene and held her by the collar. Blood was running from your head, but you would have rushed at her again. You were a small fury as I carried you back to the cottage. You writhed in my arms, showing your pointed teeth. With all your might you strove to be at it again. You could not understand why we were so concerned over your wounds—a deep hole in the throat and another on the head—your one idea was that if you were unhindered, it lay

in your power to obliterate the setter from the face of the earth.

You were transformed for days. You no longer cared for peaceful walks or for trotting about after Jacob, or even for hunting rabbits. You were aloof from us; you were always tense, listening for the possible padding of the setter. She was tied in her kennel. Her howls came across the ravine. At the sound your hackle rose and you lifted your lip in a snarl.

'Where is Hamish?' I asked, to draw your mind away. But the name had lost meaning for you. You had forgotten him.

For the first time you seemed to feel that I needed protection. You would trot round and round the cottage, head erect, then enter and sniff me with an air of concern as though to make sure that I was still sound. Your truculence extended even to your old friends. You would fly out with an impassioned yell at whatever live thing came about the place. A certain strange dog that lived a long way off possessed a very hysterical and eerie howl. At times he would keep this up by the hour, and the sound, coming on the breeze from afar, troubled you. One Sunday morning he was let loose and we could hear him coming through the ravine barking and howling alternately. He was probably in pursuit of a rabbit, but his

coming had a sinister, even a frightening quality. Presently he appeared in the road. He was a hound of sorts, with a half-mad eye and a long stiff tail. The big Airedale, which lived next door, was directly in his path. The Airedale bristled, hesitated, then fled homeward with drawn-in tail. But you were after the hound. Down the drive you went, a small blind fury. He and you disappeared, and it was long before you returned. When you did it was with the air of a conqueror unscathed and jaunty. Had he ever known that you were after him?

Your next fight took place in town. We were passing the grounds of a large house, inside the open gates of which four dogs were romping in the snow. One of them saw you and trotted between the stone pillars to inspect you. She was a fierce-looking Alsatian. Perhaps it angered her to see you on the lead. Perhaps she was merely irritated because you were another female. In any case she was a villain and a coward, for she sprang on you and caught your shoulder in her jaws. In a flash the other three—two Irish terriers and a fox-terrier—had joined her in the attack. I let go the lead and caught the Alsatian by the collar. I could not see you under that flurry and hustle of dog flesh, but I heard one choking

yell of defiance. The lodge-keeper came running out, dragged off the dogs, and picked you up.

No limp half-dead body lay in his hands, but a little black devil that bit at her rescuer and sought with fury to return to the fray. I took you from him and we stood talking for a bit. He thought you were a marvel, and he did not know that all your fighting was done in the dark.

I held you close as I walked down the slippery hill, you growling all the way. When I set you down, you excelled yourself in importance of mien. You did not walk or trot, you swaggered and swashbuckled, leaving small bloody footprints on the snow. Brave little spirit that did not know when it was beaten!

A man once told me of two Scottish terriers, father and son, which entered a burrow through two separate openings. Underground in the darkness they encountered each other, and each mistook the other for the quarry. They met in a terrible fight that ended in the death of both.

VI

Every morning we walked to the village. Through the garden, across the little stream, up the steep winding woodland path. Then through an orchard, a farmyard, and a lane shaded by great evergreens. You never followed me but always led the way, except when you stopped to investigate some alluring scent. I would wait for you, and if you did not soon appear, I would whistle. In your own good time you would return to the path. First I would see only the tip of your tail above the ferns and grasses, moving gracefully, like the head of a snake as it swims across a lake. Then the whole tail would appear, your ears, your body. You would overtake and pass me and resume your purposeful leading of the way. You were never a dog that one could teach to come 'to heel'. It was not in your nature to be docile or subservient. Once you had been taken over the intricacies of a path you learned them by heart. Your joyful intuition of woodland ways made getting lost impossible to you.

Even in the city you never forgot a place you had once liked. If you did not like it you refused to remember it for a day. There was a very narrow lane through which we sometimes went as a short cut to a park. We moved away from this part of the town, and it was more than two years later when one day I chanced to take you along this same street.

The instant we reached the lane you remembered it and turned into it, though the street had been so changed in the interval that I scarcely recognised it myself.

On these morning walks to the village one might gauge the temperature of the day by observing you at the stream. Before stepping on to the bridge you invariably left the path and pressed your way through the long grass and rushes to the water's edge. If the morning were cold you were satisfied to take a few laps

and follow me across the bridge. If it were warm you drank deeply and waded out until the swift-running ripples touched your belly. If the sun was really hot you paddled right across and climbed up on the other side, ignoring the bridge altogether. But it was on the days of fiercest heat that you loved the stream best. Then you not only paddled, you wallowed in the clear cold pool, splashing and blowing like a plump porpoise. I can see you now, your head, sleek as a seal's, rising out of the watercress. I was lucky if I escaped with dry stockings when you gave yourself that noble shake on the bank.

We would go into the farmer's stable and call on the two saddle horses. They heard us coming and whickered in gladness. They knew I was bringing handfuls of moist, tender grass or an apple picked up in the orchard, and that we were both bringing them rumours of the sweet outdoors where they longed to be.

You always went out for a short ramble by yourself before bed-time. What you did at these times was a mystery. It is certain that you did not want us with you. It was as though you said, 'Now there are peculiar earthy rites to be performed which even you, my loved ones, cannot understand'—and you would sidle out as though not wanting

to hurt our feelings by refusing to take us with you.

On one of these nights you did not return at bed-time. We waited up for a bit, but at last put out the lights, puzzled, but not greatly worried, because we felt sure you would be at the door before we slept. Instead of your bark came a mutter of thunder. It began to rain. Surely this would send you home. But an hour or more passed in mutterings and in showers and you did not come. I lighted a match and looked at the time. It was past one o'clock. We were filled with apprehension. We thought of traps, of chance shots, of all things sinister that might have befallen you. Then the storm, which had divided itself, swept down the lake and across the far hills, returned. The two rejoined in appalling noise and splendour. The woods rocked. A branch of the old cedar ground against the eave, the boughs of all the trees made a noise of desperate moaning in the intervals between the thunder-rolls. Lightning played across the rafters and on the brass hanging-lamp. The windows on all sides of the room were openings for its glancing face. The rain was a deluge, a flood. And you were out in it somewhere, lost!

It was almost morning when the flickering

against the panes ceased and we were given a space of darkness. The rain still held, but it came soberly now, soaking into the earth with a deep and murmurous insistence. Once in a while the sound of thunder came from far off like a mournful farewell.

We should never see you again. We were sure of that. We thought of you in the cruel claw of a trap, suffering and alone! We thought of you wounded, creeping half-way home and then stopping from exhaustion to die in the storm—alone! At the first streak of dawn we would go out to search for you.

But what was that? The sound of swift padding on the wet grass? A movement across the sodden fallen leaves? A whimper! Another whimper that ended in a bark of rage. You were at the door. You were angry with us for not being there to meet you. It was dreadful, this returning from the night's adventure to find a closed door, no extended welcoming hands, no applause! You whimpered, barked, and tore at the door with your nails, simultaneously.

We threw the door open and there you were, drenched, as surely no living thing was ever drenched before! Your coat was flattened till you looked half your size. Your face was peaked, bright, elfish. You were as cold as ice.

Scrubbed with a rough towel your coat stood all on end. Your whiskers stood out, your tail feathered aggressively. You hopped upon your bed for a long sleep. You smelled of wet fur and bracken.

The little red eye of sunlight winked at us through wet foliage. What rejoicing!

VII

In town the one pleasure that approached the freedom of the woods was motoring. Scarcely had the car of a friend stopped before the door when you were in the hall uttering little cries of welcome. The cars of mere acquaintances might come and go. You gave little heed to them. Your whole being seemed to resolve itself into an exquisitely sensitive ear. If we were going motoring and you must be left at

home, I had only to say, 'The poor little dog can't come,' and you would go into a far corner and sit there subdued but dignified. But there was one friend whose car was as your own. In his car yours was the best seat, for you the added speed. I shall always remember how once, when he could not take you, he left his car around the corner, on the next street, so that you might not hear the humming of its engine.

How well you knew my preparations for going out! If I pulled on my coat and hat without delay, it meant a joyous walk together. But if I opened and shut drawers, drew forth a certain hat-box, your erect ears drooped. There was no need to tell you that I was preparing for some dreadful ceremony in which you could have no part. You crept under the bed, making no sound, until my 'Good-bye, old girl' brought mournful thuddings of your tail.

In the country, no matter how lovely the morning, you stuck by me indoors while I worked. I worked long and hard, and you lay, muzzle on paws, at my feet. Sometimes I would plead with you. 'Run along out and catch a rabbit!' But though you quivered at the words you would not budge. Your fealty to the cause of my work was not to be shaken.

Short stories, plays, novels, reviewing, all must be done under your supervision. To lay down the pencil and stroke your back was better than a dozen books of reference. I can see the huge old Johnson's Dictionary in two volumes, in which all the s's were f's, lying beside you on the floor. I heave one up, looking for a word. It is the wrong volume, of course, and must be exchanged for the other. But nothing I do with them has any effect on you until they are replaced, with a bang, on the bookcase. Then you rise, stretch, yawn, showing your red, curled tongue and white teeth. You talk to me a little, gruff growling encouragements to make haste, for the sun is high and the woods are sweet.

VIII

As though to make up for the light gone from your eyes, high spirits remained with you at an age when other dogs become staid. Everything you did was done with gusto. You did not just gnaw a bone, you demolished it. You plunged through snowdrifts like a little engine clearing the track. I took you to the photographer's to have your picture taken with me, and you celebrated the occasion by a visit to the coal-cellar just before leaving. Luckily you were black already, so that no smudges came out in the picture. What a time the photographer and I had, posing you! You were put on a small table and I sat on a chair beside you, but you would not hold your head up. Some subtle scent of the table-cover obsessed you. You pressed your nostrils to it, snuffling. When I raised your head you pointed your muzzle ceilingward and looked idiotic. When I spoke sharply you decided to retire, and scratched the table-cover violently to make a bed. We were in despair. You

drooped feebly on your haunches now, spiritless and dejected. As a last hope the photographer uttered a loud 'miouw'. With a yell of rage you leaped from the table at the camera, almost knocking it over. And when, at last, we got a picture of you, your expression of blameless benignity has not been equalled. . . .

We were making one of our many removals. The house was emptied of furniture and the great van was at the door. I had shut you in an empty room, but when I went for you you were not there. Someone must have opened the door for a moment, and your ways of escape were many. In a panic we and the men searched for you, upstairs and down, the men shouting to each other from cellar to attic, everything at a standstill. You were gone, you were lost, the awful moment had come which we dreaded. Then ran Jane, the little charwoman from Glasgow, crying:

'Here she is! The wee Scottie. All by her lone on the seat of the van. Come and see for yoursel's.'

We trooped out, and there you were, as Jane said, squarely on the seat with all our household goods in the great cavern behind you. It must have been a serious business for you, finding your way to that elevation, but you

evidently thought such a joy-ride as this would be worth the pains.

You loved company. Each guest had a special welcome from you. Noise, laughter, music, and dancing put you in high feather. A late supper filled you with hilarity. Yet revels might be carried too far. When a certain hour came you arose in dignity, like a little grandmother whose will carries weight in the house, yawned without restraint, and gave the guests the signal to depart. If they paid no attention to you, you returned to your chair and curled up, obviously trying to sleep in spite of the noise. It could not be done. You would descend with a thud, walk from guest to guest whining, then go to the door and, raising your muzzle, give forth your deep bay of farewell. They were a callous lot who did not go in search of coats and hats.

On occasion we bought a special 'party' bone for you. There was one who was always told off to produce it at the moment when your desire to clear the floor was made manifest. He would swoop you up, tuck you under his arm, and glide from the room unnoticed save by us. First to the larder, where he knew the bone to be, then to the bathroom, where he placed it and you on the floor and shut you in. We might count on an hour then when the only

sign from you would be the shuddering grind of your strong teeth on the bone. And after that the loud bark that demanded liberation, a drink of cold water, and an unimpeded pathway to the land of dreams.

IX

It was necessary for you to have an operation of a serious nature. You were ten years old, and the veterinary was somewhat grave about the result. Instead of keeping you at the hospital he asked us to take you home while you were still under the ether, so that you might regain consciousness in the surroundings that were familiar and have no more shock than was necessary.

You trembled as I handed you over to him. You hated the smell of disinfectant in the hospital. The barks and howls of other dogs confined there distressed you. But his hands were kind, and mine were reassuring. You pressed your head against his tweed coat with a burrowing movement as though you would hide yourself from the fears that pressed in upon you.

I left you and went home. How quiet, how hollow the house seemed without you! The day would never end. At last a telephone message came for me. I was to fetch you. We

brought you back in a taxi, limp, with pale tongue lolling and breath heavy with ether. You were bandaged till you were sausage-like. Your breath came in little moaning gasps. There was not much sleep for anyone that night.

We were prepared the next morning to find you stretched out dead. We went to look at

you in the early winter sunlight. You were not dead, you were on your feet, walking waveringly to meet us, puzzled by the strangeness of the bandage and the fevered dreams of the night. You were ready for a drink of milk. You were ready, in fact, for a brave renewal of life!

Carefully I carried you down the stairs. Tenderly, lest I should jar the wound, set you

down in the back garden to get the invigorating freshness of the morning air. Snow had fallen deep, soft as feathers from a white duck's breast. You put your nose into it, snuffled. You took two steps, lurched feebly, regained yourself, gave a quick ecstatic kick of your legs. The next instant you were standing on your head in your favourite attitude of winter elation in the snow!

This was terrible. You would tear the stitches. You would kill yourself. You would wear anyone who loved you to fiddle-strings! Well, what of that? You rolled, you pounced, you cocked an ear at me and barked for a stick to be thrown! You were ready for life!

But I must not forget your fortitude in the visits that had to be made to the hospital for the dressing of the wound. How you submitted yourself each time, with a deep sigh, to the veterinary's hands. How, when he carried you back to me, you came, not cowed, but with an air of assuring me that all was now well with you, that you were on the mend. He grew fond of you and you of him.

A doctor I once knew told me of a spaniel he had taken to the North country for the hunting. The dog had had an encounter with a porcupine and returned to the camp, his face bristling with quills. The pulling out of them

had been a terribly painful business. He was laid on a table for the purpose. When the spaniel reached the limit of his endurance, he would catch his master's hand in his teeth, with a growl of warning, and he would be put down on the floor for a breathing space. The dog would walk up and down whimpering in pain, but each time he returned to the table, raising his paws to be lifted to it again. This was repeated until all the quills were extracted.

X

Lambie was your friend. She was a little Persian, fragile, airy, exquisite as a golden feather. She appeared not to walk but to float, propelled by the undulations of her great blonde tail. When she stood still it curved above her like a crescent moon in a halo. In her eyes, the gold of her deepened to amber.

She was delicate, fickle, perverse in all her ways. She cared only for a few, and even they could not be sure of how their caresses would be received. But your fascination for her never failed. She watched all your movements with a kind of glowing surprise, arching her back, faint quivers running across her fine fur as though an unseen breeze stirred it.

Though you disliked most cats, you were fond of Lambie. You would appear to ignore her advances, then would suddenly turn and draw your tongue quickly across her lips. Invariably she receded as though in offence, but she always returned to you, with the stealth of a returning wave, and drew close again.

Her mistress had a flat above ours. She had a loom such as is used in the Maritime Provinces, and on it she wove many coloured fabrics. It was the prettiest sight to see Lambie sitting on the loom watching the play of the shuttles, now and again putting out a paw to touch the vibrating threads. Below, where I was writing, I liked to hear the low humming of the loom. It made a wall of peaceful, even mystic, sound between me and the street.

Lambie drifted down the stairs and came to the door of the room where I worked. She stood on her hind legs and stretched till her paw touched the handle. Eagerly, sharply she shook it like an impatient caller. Though the loom of my thoughts might be moving with never so great a passion, I must hasten to the door and open it for her. Just so wide and no wider must it be opened. If thrown wide she retreats and drifts backward up the stair beneath her undulating tail. If not wide enough, a tawny foreleg advances but no body follows, for she lies crouching, growling to herself over my uncivil welcome. The door must be opened to exactly the right distance for a seemly entrance. On neither side must a hair of her be touched. It must not creak on its hinges but be held steady while she floats in, never in a straight line, but in a certain pre-

scribed zigzag across the pattern of the rugs. And so she reaches the chest on which you sit in the sun and leaps lightly to your side. She flattens her cheek against the window-pane. She rolls her eyes at you and purrs in deep content.

She had never any appetite, and it came to be the acknowledged thing that you should eat her breakfast. Each morning when you had had your own you rocked up the stairs and barked at her door. The humming of the loom ceased. The door was opened and shut. I could picture how Lambie, perched above you on the loom, looked down to see her saucer swept clean of salmon till it shone.

A motor killed her, but her lovely fur was not sullied by a mark. They dug a little grave for her in the garden and lined it with the petals of sunflowers. And there they laid her, gold among the gold.

YOU SMIRKED, HE SIMPERED

XI

What of your other friend? Your country friend whose name I did not even know. But they said he was a brute kept chained to guard I know not what treasures, a terror to pedlars, delighting to make a meal of any small dog that ventured near. He was half bulldog; the other half, I was led to believe, was a mixture of tiger and cannibal. His bark was blood-curdling, his heavy chain clanked against his kennel.

My blood froze when I missed you, and the woman who worked for me told me pantingly that you had gone that way. I ran along the path, overgrown by ferns and brambles. Among the silver birches, oaks, and thorn trees. I reached the garden of these strange new neighbours and saw the ogre sitting before his den. And you sat close beside him! Your plump haunch against his speckled hybrid haunch. You smirked, he simpered. Even when, risking my life, I rushed in and snatched you up, all the fierceness was gone

out of him. He curled himself about my legs and slavered on me. There was no doubt about it, he wanted to be loved. I squatted before the door of his kennel and put my arms about him.

XII

Your last summer we spent at the seaside on the Massachusetts coast. You could not understand the sea. You were used to lakes and little streams, but this was a horse of another colour. It was exciting but it was baffling. You rocked along the smooth sands with a lobster claw sticking out of your mouth. You sniffed the jellyfish, dug holes, and buried the starfish. You behaved like a puppy. What baffled you was that you could not quench your thirst at it. You drank and drank, raised your head, smacked your lips, slobbered. Then, planting your feet wide apart, you set to work to drink the ocean up. Your attitude said, 'I will quench my thirst or know the reason why.' But it could not be done. A wave came and drenched you. You retreated a little rueful, and then there threw up the briny water on

the sand. We were not sentimental about you. I think we laughed at you a good deal, but how we appreciated your indomitable spirit, and how we loved you!

Almost every day we took a picnic to the shore. After the first day you led the way, and people smiled to see your air of consequence, little guessing that you could not see. Our wraps were thrown on the hot sand. The picnic basket, the thermos basket, all our belongings mounded beside them. We raced across the bright strip of beach into the surf, but you did not race with us. More important and more pleasurable was your occupation. You sat beside the lunch basket guarding its contents. You might sniff around its brim, inhaling the delicious odour of the tuna fish sandwiches, but, though you knew your own sandwich was inside, you would have starved rather than touch it. It was an unlucky dog that drew near that sacred mound of our belongings. You would fly at him like a fury, and having driven him off, and more than likely bitten him, return to your post.

Oh, your joy when we came dripping back to you! The lunch was spread out. What was yours was inside you in a trice, and a good deal of what was ours was given you bit by bit. The sun blazed on us, turning us the colour

of copper. It grew too hot for you and you dug a deep hole to cool yourself in. We must roll out of the way of the flying sand.

A friend came to visit us and brought his big Airedale, Danny. Danny had motored 700 miles from Canada. He was tired and masculine and his presence seemed rather overpowering to you at first. But, when you found that he was gentle and would let you have your way with the most comfortable chair, you ceased to regard him as an intruder. When you sat up and waved your paws and talked to us in querulous high tones, it was more than Danny's nerves could stand. He would go to his master's bed and lay his head on the pillow groaning, and his master must go to him and hold his paw and comfort him.

What was there between you and Danny? Some queer neurotic complex of emotion. If you whimpered he groaned. If you barked he howled. If perchance you snapped at him, he grinned and wagged his tail.

XIII

On the shore you picked up something poisonous, and would have died but for the skill of the New England veterinary. The first time he came I did not like him. He seemed dour after our genial Vet. But when you got to know him, how gentle, how understanding of animals!

'Do you think,' I asked, 'that she may get better?'

'In three days,' he drawled, 'there will be either a rejoicing or a funeral here.'

There was a rejoicing! Through all that dreadful suffering you came, weak but incredibly tenacious of life. It was a fortnight before you were able to go for a walk. When you first recovered you tottered about the house, examining every corner of it as though you had just arrived there. Suffering seemed to have obliterated all memory of it.

Your first walk. You were lying in the hall near the front door, your muzzle on your paws, looking very small and dejected. I said:

'I wonder what she would do if I took her lead from the hook.' I took it from where it hung.

The sound it made was almost imperceptible, but it transformed you. You quivered, rose, and uttered a feeble bark, a faint echo of what your bark had been. I snapped the lead on your collar and opened the door. I thought that perhaps you might totter as far as the gate. The gate stood open.

All your little strength went into your shoulders. You pressed forward on the lead, through the gate, along the street. With every step you got stronger. By the time we had gone a block you were trotting. By the time we had gone two you were running. At top speed we reached the rocky headland. You rolled on the moss and kicked your heels. Again you were ready for life.

XIV

How you hated the New York hotel and yet made the best of it! You trudged with a kind of obstinate cheerfulness through the crowd on Fifth Avenue. You nosed and gave a tentative dig with your paw into every bit of grass we came upon. You submitted with the most pessimistic expression I had ever seen on your face to the pats of strangers in shops. You bent your neck tolerantly that Jewish shop-girls might read the name on your collar. Through it all you were miserable, longing for home. Cities were not for you or for me. They could quench the thirst of the spirit no more than the sea could quench the thirst of the throat.

When you came and stood at my knee, your head on my lap, it was—'Oh, let us go home!' When you faced me squarely and sneezed with vehemence, it was—'Oh, let us find that far-off wood!' When you were put into your crate for travelling at the New York Central, you made the station ring with your shouts of

approval. Far and away, as the porters bore you off, I could hear you proclaiming that you shook the dust of their city from your pads.

While our berths were being made up we went through the long train to the baggage-car to see you. When we entered it we were surprised to find that the baggage-man had taken you from your crate and was playing with you. You and he were having some sort of game together which entailed a good deal of prancing and yapping on your part, and squatting and 'woofing' on his. We gave you a drink of water, but you had no need of the puppy biscuit we brought, for he had shared his sandwiches with you.

You were cool and airy in the baggage-car, far more comfortable than we in our carriage. We stayed and talked awhile with the man. He told us something of his life and of the queer freight he carried. Sometimes, he said, he had as many as three corpses in the car. 'I've only one to-night,' he said. 'It's in that box there that you are leaning against.'

It was gruesome there, flying through the night, to find oneself so near to death. I turned and read the name on the coffin plate—'Melinda B . . . aged 78 years.' The man went on talking. You trotted around the coffin,

waving your tail. A strange company we were.

You had one week of freedom in your own wood before returning to town. It was a week of sheer happiness. The weather was golden October, and every morning Jacob made a fresh bonfire of brushwood and dead leaves. The air was full of the acrid smell of wood smoke. Bushes were heavy with sweet, overripe blackberries. A few birds had forgotten to leave us and sang dreamily in the reddening trees. No frost had come to spoil our garden. Asters, Michaelmas daisies, nasturtiums, and marigolds flamed for us. The grass of the lawn was a rich green that caught and held the shadows like deep water. You lay on it with raised head delicately sniffing the various scents that pleased you. You were out early in the morning, sitting on a sunny knoll, for at that hour it was cold. You were out late at night prowling among the mysteries of the silver birches in the moonlight. Your expression was one of bliss. You lived in a dream of happiness.

XV

You died at Christmas. . . . Some poison from that other sickness must have remained in you and returned swiftly, without warning, to set your brain afire. You might be saved, the doctor said, if kept quiet and inactive for some weeks. He took you to his hospital.

I went to see you once there. But you must not know that I was near you. An attendant led the way to the door and I peered in. There were a number of dogs in the room, all in separate cages. Most of them were clamorous, noisy, especially an Alsatian near the door that growled savagely when he saw me. What impressed me was your dignity. You sat small, erect, very still in your corner, quite aloof from the other dogs. I scarcely breathed lest you should hear me, but I think you felt my nearness, for you got to your feet and turned facing the door and raised your head, sniffing.

You were returned to us on Christmas morning, supposedly cured. Cured! Why, you were like a live wire. Your joy at being with

us was past bearing. Your excitement at being in your home again was past bearing. All, all was past bearing. It could not be borne. You raised your muzzle toward the lighted Christmas candles and uttered a deep cry, a bay, musical and full of despair.

I took you for a walk and you were beside yourself with excitement in the snow. I brought you home and left you with the other one while I went out again. When I came back I found that she had had a bad time with you. She had given you tablets from the doctor to quiet you, but nothing would quiet you. It could not be borne.

I telephoned for them to come for you. It was a nice young man who came. He wanted to put you in the box to save me the pain. But I must do it myself. It was small, even for you. As I closed it I found that your tail projected. I re-opened it and curled your tail about you. Your mouth was open, showing your teeth, white as a puppy's. I closed the box. It was unbelievable that I should be doing this.

XVI

I KNOW of a certain Canon X—— who had to have a dog which he loved destroyed. He took him to the place himself and went to the very door of the room where the lethal closet was. He looked down into those trusting eyes raised to his, and the attendant saw him bow his head and murmur a short prayer. I wonder what his prayer was. Perhaps—'O God, let him be not too much afraid when he finds himself alone in that darkness and I not there to protect him!'

XVII

We sent your body by train to Jacob that he might bury it in your own woods. It was spring before we saw the grave, a lovely soft April day when the brown fern fronds were uncurling and the air was full of bird song. He led the way to it with an air of pride, for he had chosen the spot with great care. On a bitter December day he had trudged through the woods for a long while before he could make up his mind. Then he had found a young pine tree on a rise of ground, and there he had dug the grave. Luckily the ground was not yet frozen.

Now he stood looking down with solemnity at the little, carefully rounded mound he had made, over which green things were already beginning to unfold. He did not say that he would miss you about the place. I knew that without his telling me. Later on in the spring I asked him what had become of a root of very lovely iris which I had placed by the edge of the border for planting. He answered: 'I put it by the place where little dog lies.'

As we stood looking down at the mound our hearts were filled with sadness. Not only because of the loss of you, but because your going had finally closed a chapter in our lives. Your life had been a part of many lovely things that were past. Hands beloved by us had held you, caressed you. Your gaiety had made us smile in times when it was hard to smile. And now Jacob stood, leaning on his spade, proud of the pretty place he had chosen for your grave.

At the time when peach trees were coming into bloom we were in the fruit district of Niagara. The trees stood in even ranks above the rich red carpet of the earth like choristers about to break into song. A wooded steep rejoiced in hepaticas and the snowy blood-root. We came out of it into the open, our hands full of flowers. A stretch of berry canes lay before us, and a young woman was moving along the rows pruning them. By her side, moving in perfect accord with her, I saw a handsome collie dog, very noble-looking, with a long head and a full white ruff. As we drew near he turned his head toward us, but he continued to move along with the girl as though the two enjoyed a communion of spirit that might not easily be interrupted. Later I was told that the collie was quite blind.

Last spring, in Sicily, we were sitting in a café drinking wine and eating cakes with a friend. A small orchestra was playing and a slender dark fellow had been dancing the Tarantella. He was all grace and swiftness, bounding, crouching, striking his hands together. The dance had just ceased, and it was a dramatic moment for the entry of a pale young man with an Italian greyhound on a lead. The man was thin with a melancholy, poetic face. He wore a black jersey and a beret. He joined a group of young Sicilians, seated about a table. He talked eagerly with them. But every now and again his bright eyes would turn toward the greyhound with a look of great affection, as though he would not have him feel neglected.

The friend we were with had met the Sicilian, had climbed a mountain with him, talked of war and politics with him. He brought him to our table and, naturally, I began to talk about his dog. What was his name? 'Cardellino . . . Goldfinch.' 'He is beautiful,' I said. 'Yes, he is very beautiful. And he has beautiful teeth. I will show you his teeth.' He bent and opened the greyhound's mouth. The small front teeth were gone. Only the fangs and back teeth remained.

'But . . .' he exclaimed, startled—'I do not

know when it happened! They were there quite lately.' A shadow fell across his face and remained there. He talked animatedly on many subjects, but I could see that his pleasure in the meeting was gone. Every now and again he threw a troubled look at his dog.

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